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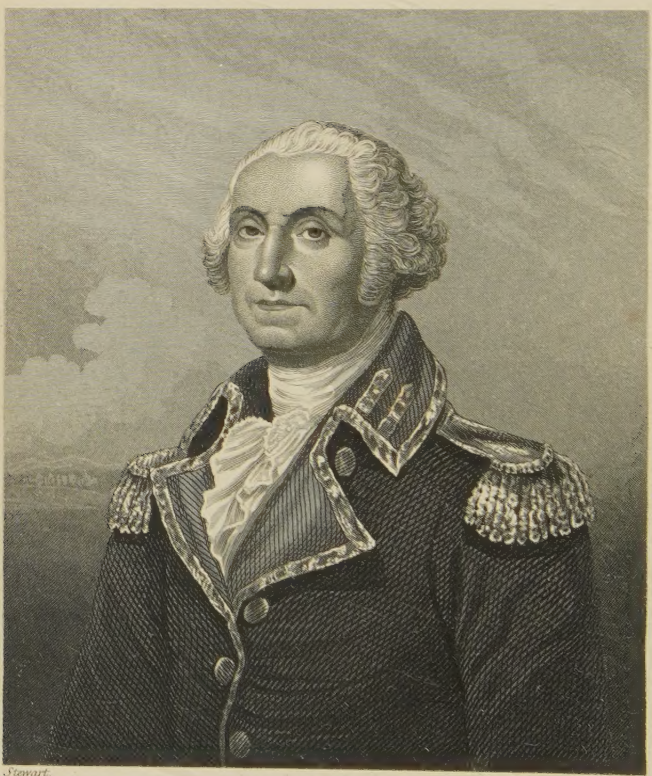

Stewart. Hinchliff.

General Washington.

LIFE

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING.

VOL. I.

EARLY LIFE, EXPEDITIONS, AND CAMPAIGNS.

LONDON:
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
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PREFACE.

THE following work has long been announced as on the eve of publication, to the great annoyance of the Author. It was, indeed, commenced several years since, but the prosecution of it has been repeatedly interrupted by other occupations, by a long absence in Europe, and by occasional derangement of health. It is only within the last two or three years that I have been able to apply myself to it steadily. This is stated to account for the delay in its publication.

The present volume treats of the earlier portion of Washington's life previous to the war of the Revolution, giving his expeditions into the wilderness, his campaigns on the frontier in the old French war; and the other "experiences," by which his character was formed, and

he gradually trained up and prepared for his great destiny.

Though a biography, and of course admitting of familiar anecdote, excursive digressions, and a flexible texture of narrative, yet, for the most part, it is essentially historic. Washington, in fact, had very little private life, but was eminently a public character. All his actions and concerns almost from boyhood were connected with the history of his country. In writing his biography, therefore, I am obliged to take glances over collateral history, as seen from his point of view and influencing his plans, and to narrate distant transactions apparently unconnected with his concerns, but eventually bearing upon the great drama in which he was the principal actor.

I have endeavoured to execute my task with candour and fidelity; stating facts on what appeared to be good authority, and avoiding as much as possible all false colouring and exaggeration. My work is founded on the correspondence of Washington, which, in fact, affords the amplest and surest groundwork for his biography. This I have consulted as it exists in manuscript in the archives of the department of State to which I have had full and frequent access. I have also made frequent

use of "Washington's Writings," as published by Mr. Sparks; a careful collation of many of which with the originals having convinced me of the general correctness of the collection, and of the safety with which it may be relied upon for historical purposes; and I am happy to bear this testimony to the essential accuracy of one whom I consider among the greatest benefactors to our national literature; and to whose writings and researches I acknowledge myself largely indebted throughout my work.

W. I.

Sunnyside, 1855.

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LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

GENEALOGY OF THE WASHINGTON FAMILY.

The Washington family is of an ancient English stock, the genealogy of which has been traced up to the century immediately succeeding the Conquest. At that time it was in possession of landed estates and manorial privileges in the county of Durham, such as were enjoyed only by those, or their descendants, who had come over from Normandy with the Conqueror, or had fought under his standard. When William the Conqueror laid waste the whole country north of the Humber, in punishment of the insurrection of the Northumbrians, he apportioned the estates among his followers, and advanced Normans and other foreigners to the principal ecclesiastical dignities. One of the most wealthy and important sees was that of Durham. Hither had been transported the bones of St. Cuthbert from their original shrine at Lindisfarne, when it was ravaged by the Danes. That saint, says Camden, was esteemed by princes and gentry a titular saint against the Scots.[1] His shrine, therefore, had been held in peculiar reverence by the Saxons, and the see of Durham endowed with extraordinary privileges.

William continued and increased those privileges. He needed a powerful adherent on this frontier to keep the

[1] Camden, Brit. iv., 349.

restless Northumbrians in order, and check Scottish invasion; and no doubt considered an enlightened ecclesiastic, appointed by the crown, a safer depositary of such power than an hereditary noble.

Having placed a noble and learned native of Loraine in the diocese, therefore, he erected it into a palatinate, over which the bishop, as Count Palatine, had temporal as well as spiritual jurisdiction. He built a strong castle for his protection, and to serve as a barrier against the Northern foe. He made him lord high-admiral of the sea and waters adjoining his palatinate, lord warden of the marches, and conservator of the league between England and Scotland. Thenceforth, we are told, the prelates of Durham owned no earthly superior within their diocese, but continued for centuries to exercise every right attached to an independent sovereign.[2]

The bishop, as Count Palatine, lived in almost royal state and splendour. He had his lay chancellor, chamberlains, secretaries, steward, treasurer, master of the horse, and a host of minor officers. Still he was under feudal obligations. All landed property in those warlike times implied military service. Bishops and abbots, equally with great barons who held estates immediately of the crown, were obliged, when required, to furnish the king with armed men in proportion to their domains: but they had their feudatories under them to aid them in this service.

The princely prelate of Durham had his barons and knights, who held estates of him on feudal tenure, and were bound to serve him in peace and war. They sat occasionally in his councils, gave martial splendour to his court, and were obliged to have horse and weapon ready for service; for they lived in a belligerent neighbourhood, disturbed occasionally by civil war, and often by Scottish foray. When the banner of St. Cuthbert, the royal standard of the province, was displayed, no armed feudatory of the bishop could refuse to take the field.[3]

Some of these prelates, in token of the warlike duties of

[2] Annals of Roger de Hovedon. Hutchinson's Durham, vol. ii. Collectanea Curiosa, vol. ii., p. 83.

[3] Robert de Graystanes, Anglia Sacra, p. 746.

their diocese, engraved on their seals a knight on horseback armed at all points, brandishing in one hand a sword, and holding forth in the other the arms of the see.[4]

Among the knights who held estates in the palatinate on these warlike conditions was WILLIAM DE HERTBURN, the progenitor of the Washingtons. His Norman name of William would seem to point out his national descent; and the family long continued to have Norman names of baptism. The surname of De Hertburn was taken from a village on the palatinate which he held of the bishop in knight's fee; probably the same now called Hartburn, on the banks of the Tees. It had become a custom among the Norman families of rank, about the time of the Conquest, to take surnames from their castles or estates; it was not until some time afterwards that surnames became generally assumed by the people.[5]

How or when the De Hertburns first acquired possession of their village is not known. They may have been companions in arms with Robert de Brus (or Bruce), a noble knight of Normandy, rewarded by William the Conqueror with great possessions in the North, and, among others, with the lordships of Hert and Hertness, in the county of Durham.

The first actual mention we find of the family is in the Bolden Book, a record of all the lands appertaining to the diocese in 1183. In this it is stated that William de Hertburn had exchanged his village of Hertburn for the manor and village of Wessyngton, likewise in the diocese; paying the bishop a quit-rent of four pounds, and engaging to attend him with two greyhounds in grand hunts, and to furnish a man-at-arms whenever military aid should be required of the palatinate.[6]

[4] Camden, Brit. iv., 349.

[5] Lower on Surnames, vol. i., p. 43. Fuller says, that the custom of surnames was brought from France in Edward the Confessor's time, about fifty years before the Conquest; but did not become universally settled until some hundred years afterwards. At first they did not descend hereditarily on the family.—*Fuller, Church History. Roll of Battle Abbey.*

[6] THE BOLDEN BOOK. As this ancient document gives the first trace of the Washington family, it merits especial mention. In 1183, a survey was made by order of Bishop de Pusaz of all the lands of the

The family changed its surname with its estate, and thenceforward assumed that of De Wessyngton.[7] The condition of military service attached to its manor will be found to have been often exacted, nor was the service in the grand hunt an idle form. Hunting came next to war in those days, as the occupation of the nobility and gentry. The clergy engaged in it equally with the laity. The hunting establishment of the Bishop of Durham was on a princely scale. He had his forests, chases, and parks, with their train of foresters, rangers, and park-keepers. A grand hunt was a splendid pageant, in which all his barons and knights attended him with horse and hound. The stipulations with the Seignior of Wessyngton show how strictly the rights of the chase were defined. All the game taken by him in going to the forest belonged to the bishop; all taken on returning belonged to himself.[8]

Hugh de Pusaz (or De Pudsay), during whose episcopate we meet with this first trace of the De Wessyngtons, was a nephew of King Stephen, and a prelate of great pretensions; fond of appearing with a train of ecclesiastics and an armed retinue. When Richard Cœur de Lion put everything at pawn and sale to raise funds for a crusade to the Holy Land, the bishop resolved to accompany him. More wealthy than his sovereign, he made magnificent preparations. Besides ships to convey his troops and retinue, he

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see held in demesne, or by tenants in villanage. The record was entered in a book called the Bolden Buke; the parish of Bolden occurring first in alphabetical arrangement. The document commences in the following manner: Incipit liber qui vocatur Bolden Book. Anno Dominicæ Incarnationis, 1183, &c.

The following is the memorandum in question:

Willus de Herteburn habet Wessyngton (excepta ecclesia et terra ecclesie partinen) ad excamb. pro villa de Herteburn quam pro hac quietam clamavit: Et reddit 4 L. Et vadit in *magna caza* cum 2 Leporar. Et quando commune auxilium venerit debet dare 1 Militem ad plus de auxilio, &c.—*Collectanea Curiosa*, vol. ii., p. 89.

The Bolden Buke is a small folio, deposited in the office of the bishop's auditor, at Durham.

[7] The name is probably of Saxon origin. It existed in England prior to the Conquest. The village of Wassengtone is mentioned in a Saxon charter as granted by king Edgar in 973 to Thorney Abbey.—*Collectanea Topographica*, iv. 55.

[8] Hutchinson's Durham, vol. ii., p. 489.

had a sumptuous galley for himself, fitted up with a throne or episcopal chair of silver, and all the household, and even culinary, utensils, were of the same costly material. In a word, had not the prelate been induced to stay at home, and aid the king with his treasures, by being made one of the regents of the kingdom, and Earl of Northumberland for life, the De Wessyngtons might have followed the banner of St. Cuthbert to the Holy Wars.

Nearly seventy years afterwards we find the family still retaining its manorial estate in the palatinate. The names of Bondo de Wessyngton and William, his son, appear on charters of land granted in 1257 to religious houses. Soon after occurred the wars of the barons, in which the throne of Henry III. was shaken by the De Mountforts. The chivalry of the palatinate rallied under the royal standard. On the list of loyal knights who fought for their sovereign in the disastrous battle of Lewes (1264), in which the king was taken prisoner, we find the name of William Weshington, of Weshington.[9]

During the splendid pontificate of Anthony Beke (or Beak), the knights of the palatinate had continually to be in the saddle, or buckled in armour. The prelate was so impatient of rest that he never took more than one sleep, saying it was unbecoming a man to turn from one side to another in bed. He was perpetually, when within his diocese, either riding from one manor to another, or hunting and hawking. Twice he assisted Edward I., with all his force, in invading Scotland. In the progress northward with the king, the bishop led the van, marching a day in advance of the main body, with a mercenary force, paid by himself, of one thousand foot and five hundred horse. Besides these, he had his feudatories of the palatinate; six bannerets and one hundred and sixty knights, not one of whom, says an old poem, but surpassed Arthur himself, though endowed with the charmed gifts of Merlin.[10]

[9] This list of knights was inserted in the Bolden Book as an additional entry. It is cited at full length by Hutchinson.—*Hist. Durham*, vol. i., p. 220.

[10] Onques Artous pour touz ces charmes,
Si beau prisent ne ot de Merlyn.
SIEGE OF KARLAVEROCK; *an old Poem in Norman French.*

We presume the De Wessyngtons were among those preux chevaliers, as the banner of St. Cuthbert had been taken from its shrine on the occasion, and of course all the armed force of the diocese was bound to follow. It was borne in front of the army by a monk of Durham. There were many rich caparisons, says the old poem, many beautiful pennons fluttering from lances, and much neighing of steeds. The hills and valleys were covered with sumpter horses and waggons laden with tents and provisions. The Bishop of Durham, in his warlike state, appeared, we are told, more like a powerful prince than a priest or prelate.[11]

At the surrender of the crown of Scotland by John Baliol, which ended this invasion, the bishop negotiated on the part of England. As a trophy of the event, the chair of Scone, used on the inauguration of the Scottish monarchs, and containing the stone on which Jacob dreamed, the palladium of Scotland, was transferred to England and deposited in Westminster Abbey.[12]

In the reign of Edward III. we find the De Wessyngtons still mingling in chivalrous scenes. The name of Sir Stephen de Wessyngton appears on a list of knights (nobles chevaliers) who were to tilt at a tournament at Dunstable in 1334. He bore for his device a golden rose on an azure field.[13]

[11] Robert de Graystanes, Ang. Sac., p. 746, cited by Hutchinson, vol. i., p. 239.

[12] An extract from an inedited poem, cited by Nicolas in his translation of the Siege of Carlavarock, gives a striking picture of the palatinate in these days of its pride and splendour:—

There valour bowed before the rood and book,
  And kneeling knighthood served a prelate lord,
Yet little deigned he on such train to look,
  Or glance of ruth or pity to afford.

There time has heard the peal rung out at night,
  Has seen from every tower the cressets stream,
When the red bale-fire on yon western height
  Had roused the warder from his fitful dream.

Has seen old Durham's lion banner float
  O'er the proud bulwark, that, with giant pride
And feet deep plunged amidst the circling moat,
  The efforts of the roving Scot defied.

[13] Collect. Topog. et Genealog., t. iv., p. 395.

He was soon called to exercise his arms in a sterner field. In 1346, Edward and his son, the Black Prince, being absent with the armies in France, King David of Scotland invaded Northumberland with a powerful army. Queen Philippa, who had remained in England as regent, immediately took the field, calling the northern prelates and nobles to join her standard. They all hastened to obey. Among the prelates was Hatfield, the Bishop of Durham. The sacred banner of St. Cuthbert was again displayed, and the chivalry of the palatinate assisted at the famous battle of Nevil's Cross, near Durham, in which the Scottish army was defeated and King David taken prisoner.

Queen Philippa hastened with a victorious train to cross the sea at Dover, and join King Edward in his camp before Calais. The prelate of Durham accompanied her. His military train consisted of three bannerets, forty-eight knights, one hundred and sixty-four esquires, and eighty archers, on horseback.[14] They all arrived to witness the surrender of Calais (1346), on which occasion Queen Philippa distinguished herself by her noble interference in saving the lives of its patriot citizens.

Such were the warlike and stately scenes in which the De Wessyngtons were called to mingle by their feudal duties as knights of the palatinate. A few years after the last event (1350), William, at that time lord of the manor of Wessyngton, had license to settle it and the village upon himself, his wife, and "his own right heirs." He died in 1367, and his son and heir, William, succeeded to the estate. The latter is mentioned under the name of Sir William de Weschington, as one of the knights who sat in the privy council of the county during the episcopate of John Fordham.[15] During this time the whole force of the palatinate was roused to pursue a foray of Scots, under Sir William Douglas, who, having ravaged the country, were returning laden with spoil. It was a fruit of the feud between the Douglases and the Percys. The marauders were overtaken by Hotspur Percy, and then took

[14] Collier's Eccles. Hist., Book VI., Cent. XIV.
[15] Hutchinson, vol. ii.

place the battle of Otterbourne, in which Percy was taken prisoner and Douglas slain.[16]

For upwards of two hundred years the De Wessyngtons had now sat in the councils of the palatinate; had mingled with horse and hound in the stately hunts of its prelates, and followed the banner of St. Cuthbert to the field; but Sir William, just mentioned, was the last of the family that rendered this feudal service. He was the last male of the line to which the inheritance of the manor, by the license granted to his father, was confined. It passed away from the De Wessyngtons, after his death, by the marriage of his only daughter and heir, Dionisia, with Sir William of Temple Studley. By the year 1400 it had become the property of the Blaykestons.[17]

But though the name of De Wessyngton no longer figured on the chivalrous roll of the palatinate, it continued for a time to flourish in the cloisters. In the year 1416, John de Wessyngton was elected prior of the Benedictine convent, attached to the cathedral. The monks of this convent had been licensed by Pope Gregory VII. to perform the solemn duties of the cathedral in place of secular clergy, and William the Conqueror had ordained that the priors of Durham should enjoy all the liberties, dignities, and honours of abbots; should hold their lands and churches in their own hands and free disposition, and have the abbot's seat on the left side of the choir—thus taking rank of every one but the bishop.[18]

In the course of three centuries and upwards, which had since elapsed, these honours and privileges had been subject to repeated dispute and encroachment, and the prior had nearly been elbowed out of the abbot's chair by the archdeacon. John de Wessyngton was not a man to submit tamely to such infringements of his rights. He forthwith set himself up as the champion of his priory, and in a learned tract, *de Juribus et Possessionibus Ecclesiæ Dunelmensis*, established the validity of the long-controverted

[16] Theare the Dowglas lost his life,
And the Percye was led away.
FORDUN. *Quoted by Surtees, Hist. Durham*, vol. i.

[17] Hutchinson's Durham, vol. ii., p. 489.

[18] Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum. T. i., p. 231. London ed. 1846.

claims, and fixed himself firmly in the abbot's chair. His success in this controversy gained him much renown among his brethren of the cowl, and in 1426 he presided at the general chapter of the order of St. Benedict, held at Northampton.

The stout prior of Durham had other disputes with the bishop and the secular clergy touching his ecclesiastical functions, in which he was equally victorious, and several tracts remain in manuscript in the dean and chapter's library; weapons hung up in the church armoury as memorials of his polemical battles.

Finally, after fighting divers good fights for the honour of his priory, and filling the abbot's chair for thirty years, he died, to use an ancient phrase, "in all the odour of sanctity," in 1446, and was buried like a soldier on his battle-field, at the door of the north aisle of his church, near to the altar of St. Benedict. On his tombstone was an inscription in brass, now unfortunately obliterated, which may have set forth the valiant deeds of this Washington of the cloisters.[19]

By this time the primitive stock of the De Wessyngtons had separated into divers branches, holding estates in various parts of England; some distinguishing themselves in the learned professions, others receiving knighthood for public services. Their names are to be found honourably recorded in county histories, or engraved on monuments in time-worn churches and cathedrals, those garnering places of English worthies. By degrees the seignorial sign of *de* disappeared from before the family surname, which also varied from Wessyngton to Wassington, Wasshington, and finally to Washington.[20] A parish in the county of Durham bears the name as last written, and in this probably the ancient manor of Wes-

[19] Hutchinson's Durham, vol. ii., passim.

[20] "The de came to be omitted," says an old treatise, "when Englishmen and English manners began to prevail upon the recovery of lost credit."— *Verstegan's Restitution of decayed Intelligence in Antiquities.* Lond. 1634.

About the time of Henry VI., says another treatise, the de or d' was generally dropped from surnames, when the title of *armiger*, *esquier*, amongst the heads of families, and *generosus*, or *gentylman*, among younger sons was substituted.— *Lower on Surnames,* vol. i.

syngton was situated. There is another parish of the name in the county of Sussex.

The branch of the family to which our Washington immediately belongs sprang from Laurence Washington, Esquire, of Gray's Inn, son of John Washington, of Warton, in Lancashire. This Laurence Washington was for some time mayor of Northampton, and on the dissolution of the priories by Henry VIII. he received, in 1538, a grant of the manor of Sulgrave, in Northamptonshire, with other lands in the vicinity, all confiscated property formerly belonging to the monastery of St. Andrew's.

Sulgrave remained in the family until 1620, and was commonly called "Washington's Manor."[21]

One of the direct descendants of the grantee of Sulgrave was Sir William Washington, of Packington, in the county of Kent. He married a sister of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the unfortunate favourite of Charles I. This may have attached the Sulgrave Washingtons to the Stuart dynasty, to which they adhered loyally and generously throughout all its vicissitudes. One of the family, Lieutenant-Colonel James Washington, took up arms in the cause of King Charles, and lost his life at the siege of Pontefract Castle. Another of the Sulgrave line, Sir Henry Wash-

[21] The manor of Garsdon in Wiltshire has been mentioned as the homestead of the ancestors of our Washington. This is a mistake. It was the residence of Sir Laurence Washington, second son of the above-mentioned grantee of Sulgrave. Elizabeth, granddaughter of this Sir Laurence, married Robert Shirley, Earl Ferrers and Viscount of Tamworth. Washington became a baptismal name among the Shirleys—several of the Earls Ferrers have borne it.

The writer of these pages visited Sulgrave a few years since. It was in a quiet rural neighbourhood, where the farmhouses were quaint and antiquated. A part only of the manor-house remained, and was inhabited by a farmer. The Washington crest, in coloured glass, was to be seen in a window of what was now the buttery. A window on which the whole family arms was emblazoned had been removed to the residence of the actual proprietor of the manor. Another relic of the ancient manor of the Washingtons was a rookery in a venerable grove hard by. The rooks, those stanch adherents to old family abodes, still hovered and cawed about their hereditary nests. In the pavement of the parish church we were shown a stone slab bearing effigies on plates of brass of Laurence Washington, gent., and Anne his wife, and their four sons and eleven daughters. The inscription in black letter was dated 1564.

ington, son and heir of Sir William, before mentioned, exhibited in the civil wars the old chivalrous spirit of the knights of the palatinate. He served under Prince Rupert at the storming of Bristol, in 1643, and when the assailants were beaten off at every point, he broke in with a handful of infantry at a weak part of the wall, made room for a horse to follow, and opened a path to victory.[22]

He distinguished himself still more in 1646, when elevated to the command of Worcester, the governor having been captured by the enemy. It was a time of confusion and dismay. The king had fled from Oxford in disguise, and gone to the parliamentary camp at Newark. The royal cause was desperate. In this crisis Sir Henry received a letter from Fairfax, who, with his victorious army, was at Haddington, demanding the surrender of Worcester. The following was Colonel Washington's reply :—

Sir,

It is acknowledged by your books and by report of your own quarter, that the king is in some of your armies. That granted, it may be easy for you to procure his Majesty's commands for the disposal of this garrison. Till then I shall make good the trust reposed in me. As for conditions, if I shall be necessitated, I shall make the best I can. The worst I know and fear not; if I had, the profession of a soldier had not been begun, nor so long continued by your Excellency's humble servant,

Henry Washington.[23]

In a few days Colonel Whalley invested the city with five thousand troops. Sir Henry despatched messenger after messenger in quest of the king to know his pleasure. None of them returned. A female emissary was equally unavailing. Week after week elapsed, until nearly three months had expired. Provisions began to fail. The city was in confusion. The troops grew insubordinate. Yet Sir Henry persisted in the defence. General Fairfax, with 1,500 horse and foot, was daily expected. There was not powder enough for an hour's contest should the city be stormed. Still Sir Henry "awaited his Majesty's commands."

At length news arrived that the king had issued an

[22] Clarendon, Book vii.

[23] Greene's Antiquities of Worcester, p. 273.

order for the surrender of all towns, castles, and forts. A printed copy of the order was shown to Sir Henry, and on the faith of that document he capitulated (19th July, 1646) on honourable terms, won by his fortitude and perseverance. Those who believe in hereditary virtues may see foreshadowed in the conduct of this Washington of Worcester, the magnanimous constancy of purpose, the disposition to "hope against hope," which bore our Washington triumphantly through the darkest days of our revolution.

We have little note of the Sulgrave branch of the family after the death of Charles I. and the exile of his successor. England, during the protectorate, became an uncomfortable residence to such as had signalized themselves as adherents to the house of Stuart. In 1655, an attempt at a general insurrection drew on them the vengeance of Cromwell. Many of their party who had no share in the conspiracy, yet sought refuge in other lands, where they might live free from molestation. This may have been the case with two brothers, John and Andrew Washington, great-grandsons of the grantee of Sulgrave, and uncles of Sir Henry, the gallant defender of Worcester. John had for some time resided at South Cave, in the East Riding of Yorkshire,[24] but now emigrated with his brother to Virginia; which colony, from its allegiance to the exiled monarch and the Anglican Church, had become a favourite resort of the Cavaliers. The brothers arrived in Virginia in 1657, and purchased lands in Westmoreland county, on the Northern Neck, between the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers. John married a Miss Anne Pope, of the same county, and took up his residence on Bridges Creek, near where it falls into the Potomac. He became an extensive planter, and, in process of time, a magistrate and member of the house of Burgesses. Having a spark of the old military fire of the family, we find him, as Colonel Washington, leading the Virginia forces, in co-operation with those of Maryland, against a band of Seneca Indians, who

[24] South Cave is near the Humber. "In the vicinity is Cave Castle, an embattled edifice. It has a noble collection of paintings, including a portrait of General Washington, whose ancestors possessed a portion of the estate."—*Lewes, Topog. Dict.*, vol. i., p. 530.

were ravaging the settlements along the Potomac. In honour of his public services and private virtues the parish in which he resided was called after him, and still bears the name of Washington. He lies buried in a vault on Bridges Creek, which, for generations, was the family place of sepulture.

The estate continued in the family. His grandson Augustine, the father of our Washington, was born there in 1694. He was twice married; first (April 20th, 1715), to Jane, daughter of Caleb Butler, Esq., of Westmoreland County, by whom he had four children, of whom only two, Lawrence and Augustine, survived the years of childhood; their mother died November 24th, 1728, and was buried in the family vault.

On the 6th of March, 1730, he married in second nuptials, Mary, the daughter of Colonel Ball, a young and beautiful girl, said to be the belle of the Northern Neck. By her he had four sons, George, Samuel, John Augustine, and Charles; and two daughters, Elizabeth, or Betty, as she was commonly called, and Mildred, who died in infancy.

George, the eldest, the subject of this biography, was born on the 22nd of February (11th, O. S.) 1732, in the homestead on Bridges Creek. This house commanded a view over many miles of the Potomac, and the opposite shore of Maryland. It had probably been purchased with the property, and was one of the primitive farmhouses of Virginia. The roof was steep, and sloped down into low projecting eaves. It had four rooms on the ground-floor, and others in the attic, and an immense chimney at each end. Not a vestige of it remains. Two or three decayed fig-trees, with shrubs and vines, linger about the place, and here and there a flower grown wild serves "to mark where a garden has been;" such, at least, was the case a few years since, but these may have likewise passed away. A stone[25] marks the site of the house, and an inscription denotes its being the birthplace of Washington.

We have entered with some minuteness into this genealogical detail—tracing the family step by step through the

[25] Placed there by George W. Custis.

pages of historical documents for upwards of six centuries —and we have been tempted to do so by the documentary proofs it gives of the lineal and enduring worth of the race. We have shown that, for many generations, and through a variety of eventful scenes, it has maintained an equality of fortune and respectability, and whenever brought to the test has acquitted itself with honour and loyalty. Hereditary rank may be an illusion, but hereditary virtue gives a patent of innate nobleness beyond all the blazonry of the Heralds' College.

CHAPTER II.

Home of Washington's Boyhood — His early Education — Lawrence Washington and his Campaign in the West Indies—Death of Washington's Father—The widowed Mother and her Children—School Exercises.

Not long after the birth of George, his father removed to an estate in Stafford County, opposite Fredericksburg. The house was similar in style to the one at Bridges Creek, and stood on a rising ground overlooking a meadow which bordered the Rappahannock. This was the home of George's boyhood; the meadow was his playground, and the scene of his early athletic sports; but this home, like that in which he was born, has disappeared; the site is only to be traced by fragments of bricks, china, and earthenware.

In those days the means of instruction in Virginia were limited, and it was the custom among the wealthy planters to send their sons to England to complete their education. This was done by Augustine Washington with his eldest son Lawrence, then about fifteen years of age, and whom he no doubt considered the future head of the family. George was yet in early childhood: as his intellect dawned he received the rudiments of education in the best establishment for the purpose that the neighbourhood afforded. It was what was called in popular parlance, an "old field school-house;" humble enough in its pretensions, and kept by one of his father's tenants named Hobby, who, more-

over, was sexton of the parish. The instruction doled out by him must have been of the simplest kind—reading, writing, and ciphering, perhaps; but George had the benefit of mental and moral culture at home, from an excellent father.

Several traditional anecdotes have been given to the world, somewhat prolix and trite, but illustrative of the familiar and practical manner in which Augustine Washington, in the daily intercourse of domestic life, impressed the ductile mind of his child with high maxims of religion and virtue, and imbued him with a spirit of justice and generosity, and, above all, a scrupulous love of truth.

When George was about seven or eight years old, his brother Lawrence returned from England, a well-educated and accomplished youth. There was a difference of fourteen years in their ages, which may have been one cause of the strong attachment which took place between them. Lawrence looked down with a protecting eye upon the boy whose dawning intelligence and perfect rectitude won his regard; while George looked up to his manly and cultivated brother as a model in mind and manners. We call particular attention to this brotherly interchange of affection, from the influence it had on all the future career of the subject of this memoir.

Lawrence Washington had something of the old military spirit of the family, and circumstances soon called it into action. Spanish depredations on British commerce had recently provoked reprisals. Admiral Vernon, commander-in-chief in the West Indies, had accordingly captured Porto Bello, on the Isthmus of Darien. The Spaniards were preparing to revenge the blow; the French were fitting out ships to aid them. Troops were embarked in England for another campaign in the West Indies; a regiment of four battalions was to be raised in the colonies, and sent to join them at Jamaica. There was a sudden outbreak of military ardour in the province; the sound of drum and fife was heard in the villages with the parade of recruiting parties. Lawrence Washington, now twenty-two years of age, caught the infection. He obtained a captain's commission in the newly-raised regiment, and embarked with it for the West Indies in 1740. He served in the joint

expeditions of Admiral Vernon and General Wentworth, in the land forces commanded by the latter, and acquired the friendship and confidence of both of those officers. He was present at the siege of Carthagena, when it was bombarded by the fleet, and when the troops attempted to escalade the citadel. It was an ineffectual attack; the ships could not get near enough to throw their shells into the town, and the scaling-ladders proved too short. That part of the attack, however, with which Lawrence was concerned, distinguished itself by its bravery; the troops sustained, unflinching, a destructive fire for several hours, and at length retired with honour, their small force having sustained a loss of about six hundred in killed and wounded.

We have here the secret of that martial spirit so often cited of George in his boyish days. He had seen his brother fitted out for the wars. He had heard by letter and otherwise of the warlike scenes in which he was mingling. All his amusements took a military turn. He made soldiers of his schoolmates; they had their mimic parades, reviews, and sham fights; a boy named William Bustle was sometimes his competitor, but George was commander-in-chief of Hobby's school.

Lawrence Washington returned home in the autumn of 1742, the campaigns in the West Indies being ended, and Admiral Vernon and General Wentworth being recalled to England. It was the intention of Lawrence to rejoin his regiment in that country, and seek promotion in the army; but circumstances completely altered his plans He formed an attachment to Anne, the eldest daughter of the Honourable William Fairfax, of Fairfax County; his addresses were well received, and they became engaged. Their nuptials were delayed by the sudden and untimely death of his father, which took place on the 12th of April, 1743, after a short but severe attack of gout in the stomach, and when but forty-nine years of age. George had been absent from home on a visit during his father's illness, and just returned in time to receive a parting look of affection.

Augustine Washington left large possessions, distributed by will among his children. To Lawrence, the estate on the banks of the Potomac, with other real property, and several shares in iron-works. To Augustine, the second

son by the first marriage, the old homestead and estate in Westmoreland. The children by the second marriage were severally well provided for, and George, when he became of age, was to have the house and lands on the Rappahannock.

In the month of July the marriage of Lawrence with Miss Fairfax took place. He now gave up all thoughts of foreign service, and settled himself on his estate on the banks of the Potomac, to which he gave the name of Mount Vernon, in honour of the admiral.

Augustine took up his abode at the homestead on Bridges Creek, and married Anne, daughter and co-heiress of William Aylett, Esquire, of Westmoreland County.

George, now eleven years of age, and the other children of the second marriage, had been left under the guardianship of their mother, to whom was intrusted the proceeds of all their property, until they should severally come of age. She proved herself worthy of the trust. Endowed with plain, direct good sense, thorough conscientiousness, and prompt decision, she governed her family strictly, but kindly, exacting deference, while she inspired affection. George, being her eldest son, was thought to be her favourite, yet she never gave him undue preference, and the implicit deference exacted from him in childhood continued to be habitually observed by him to the day of her death. He inherited from her a high temper and a spirit of command, but her early precepts and example taught him to restrain and govern that temper, and to square his conduct on the exact principles of equity and justice.

Tradition gives an interesting picture of the widow, with her little flock gathered round her, as was her daily wont, reading to them lessons of religion and morality out of some standard work. Her favourite volume was Sir Matthew Hale's Contemplations, moral and divine. The admirable maxims therein contained, for outward action as well as self-government, sank deep into the mind of George, and, doubtless, had a great influence in forming his character. They certainly were exemplified in his conduct throughout life. This mother's manual, bearing his mother's name, Mary Washington, written with her own hand, was ever preserved by him with filial care, and

may still be seen in the archives of Mount Vernon. A precious document! Let those who wish to know the moral foundation of his character consult its pages.

Having no longer the benefit of a father's instructions at home, and the scope of tuition of Hobby, the sexton, being too limited for the growing wants of his pupil, George was now sent to reside with Augustine Washington, at Bridges Creek, and enjoy the benefit of a superior school in that neighbourhood, kept by a Mr. Williams. His education, however, was plain and practical. He never attempted the learned languages, nor manifested any inclination for rhetoric or belles-lettres. His object, or the object of his friends, seems to have been confined to fitting him for ordinary business. His manuscript school-books still exist, and are models of neatness and accuracy. One of them, it is true, a ciphering-book, preserved in the library at Mount Vernon, has some schoolboy attempts at calligraphy; nondescript birds, executed with a flourish of the pen, or profiles of faces, probably intended for those of his schoolmates; the rest are all grave and business-like. Before he was thirteen years of age, he had copied into a volume forms of all kinds of mercantile and legal papers; bills of exchange, notes of hand, deeds, bonds, and the like. This early self-tuition gave him throughout life, a lawyer's skill in drafting documents, and a merchant's exactness in keeping accounts; so that all the concerns of his various estates—his dealings with his domestic stewards and foreign agents—his accounts with government, and all his financial transactions are, to this day, to be seen posted up in books, in his own handwriting—monuments of his method and unwearied accuracy.

He was a self-disciplinarian in physical as well as mental matters, and practised himself in all kinds of athletic exercises, such as running, leaping, wrestling, pitching quoits, and tossing bars. His frame, even in infancy, had been large and powerful, and he now excelled most of his playmates in contests of agility and strength. As a proof of his muscular power, a place is still pointed out at Fredericksburg, near the lower ferry, where, when a boy, he flung a stone across the Rappahannock. In horsemanship, too, he already excelled, and was ready to back, and able

to manage the most restive steed. Traditional anecdotes remain of his achievements in this respect.

Above all, his inherent probity and the principles of justice on which he regulated all his conduct, even at this early period of life, were soon appreciated by his schoolmates; he was referred to as an umpire in their disputes, and his decisions were never reversed. As he had formerly been military chieftain, he was now legislator of the school; thus displaying in boyhood a type of the future man.

CHAPTER III.

Paternal conduct of an Elder Brother—The Fairfax Family—Washington's Code of Morals and Manners—Soldiers' Tales—Their Influence—Washington prepares for the Navy—A Mother's Objections—Return to School—Studies and Exercises—A Schoolboy Passion—The Lowland Beauty—Love ditties at Mount Vernon—Visit to Belvoir—Lord Fairfax—Fox-hunting a remedy for Love—Proposition for a Surveying Expedition.

The attachment of Lawrence Washington to his brother George seems to have acquired additional strength and tenderness on their father's death; he now took a truly paternal interest in his concerns, and had him as frequently as possible a guest at Mount Vernon. Lawrence had deservedly become a popular and leading personage in the country. He was a member of the House of Burgesses, and Adjutant-General of the district, with the rank of major, and a regular salary. A frequent sojourn with him brought George into familiar intercourse with the family of his father-in-law, the Honourable William Fairfax, who resided at a beautiful seat called Belvoir, a few miles below Mount Vernon, and on the same woody ridge bordering the Potomac.

William Fairfax was a man of liberal education and intrinsic worth; he had seen much of the world, and his mind had been enriched and ripened by varied and adventurous experience. Of an ancient English family in Yorkshire, he had entered the army at the age of twenty-one; had served with honour both in the East and West Indies, and officiated as governor of New Providence, after having

aided in rescuing it from pirates. For some years past he had resided in Virginia, to manage the immense landed estates of his cousin, Lord Fairfax, and lived at Belvoir in the style of an English country gentleman, surrounded by an intelligent and cultivated family of sons and daughters.

An intimacy with a family like this, in which the frankness and simplicity of rural and colonial life were united with European refinement, could not but have a beneficial effect in moulding the character and manners of a somewhat homebred schoolboy. It was probably his intercourse with them, and his ambition to acquit himself well in their society, that set him upon compiling a code of morals and manners which still exists in a manuscript in his own handwriting, entitled "Rules for behaviour in company and conversation." It is extremely minute and circumstantial. Some of the rules for personal deportment extend to such trivial matters, and are so quaint and formal, as almost to provoke a smile; but in the main a better manual of conduct could not be put into the hands of a youth. The whole code evinces that rigid propriety and self-control to which he subjected himself, and by which he brought all the impulses of a somewhat ardent temper under conscientious government.

Other influences were brought to bear on George during his visit at Mount Vernon. His brother Lawrence still retained some of his military inclinations, fostered no doubt by his post of Adjutant-General. William Fairfax, as we have shown, had been a soldier, and in many trying scenes. Some of Lawrence's comrades of the provincial regiment, who had served with him in the West Indies, were occasional visitors at Mount Vernon; or a ship of war, possibly one of Vernon's old fleet, would anchor in the Potomac, and its officers be welcome guests at the tables of Lawrence and his father-in-law. Thus military scenes on sea and shore would become the topics of conversation. The capture of Porto Bello; the bombardment of Carthagena; old stories of cruisings in the East and West Indies, and campaigns against the pirates. We can picture to ourselves George, a grave and earnest boy, with an expanding intellect, and a deep-seated passion for enterprise, listening

to such conversations with a kindling spirit and a growing desire for military life. In this way most probably was produced that desire to enter the navy which he evinced when about fourteen years of age. The opportunity for gratifying it appeared at hand. Ships of war frequented the colonies, and at times, as we have hinted, were anchored in the Potomac. The inclination was encouraged by Lawrence Washington and Mr. Fairfax. Lawrence retained pleasant recollections of his cruisings in the fleet of Admiral Vernon, and considered the naval service a popular path to fame and fortune. George was at a suitable age to enter the navy. The great difficulty was to procure the assent of his mother. She was brought, however, to acquiesce; a midshipman's warrant was obtained, and it is even said that the luggage of the youth was actually on board of a man-of-war, anchored in the river just below Mount Vernon.

At the eleventh hour the mother's heart faltered. This was her eldest born. A son, whose strong and stedfast character promised to be a support to herself and a protection to her other children. The thought of his being completely severed from her, and exposed to the hardships and perils of a boisterous profession, overcame even her resolute mind, and at her urgent remonstrances the nautical scheme was given up.

To school, therefore, George returned, and continued his studies for nearly two years longer, devoting himself especially to mathematics, and accomplishing himself in those branches calculated to fit him either for civil or military service. Among these, one of the most important in the actual state of the country was land-surveying. In this he schooled himself thoroughly, using the highest processes of the art; making surveys about the neighbourhood, and keeping regular field-books, some of which we have examined, in which the boundaries and measurements of the fields surveyed were carefully entered, and diagrams made, with a neatness and exactness as if the whole related to important land transactions instead of being mere school exercises. Thus, in his earliest days, there was perseverance and completeness in all his undertakings. Nothing was left half done, or done in a hurried and slovenly

manner. The habit of mind thus cultivated continued throughout life; so that however complicated his tasks and overwhelming his cares, in the arduous and hazardous situations in which he was often placed, he found time to do everything, and to do it well. He had acquired the magic of method, which of itself works wonders.

In one of these manuscript memorials of his practical studies and exercises, we have come upon some documents singularly in contrast with all that we have just cited, and with his apparently unromantic character. In a word, there are evidences in his own handwriting, that, before he was fifteen years of age, he had conceived a passion for some unknown beauty, so serious as to disturb his otherwise well-regulated mind, and to make him really unhappy. Why this juvenile attachment was a source of unhappiness we have no positive means of ascertaining. Perhaps the object of it may have considered him a mere schoolboy, and treated him as such; or his own shyness may have been in his way, and his "rules for behaviour and conversation" may as yet have sat awkwardly on him, and rendered him formal and ungainly when he most sought to please. Even in later years he was apt to be silent and embarrassed in female society. "He was a very bashful young man," said an old lady, whom he used to visit when they were both in their nonage. "I used often to wish he would talk more."

Whatever may have been the reason, this early attachment seems to have been a source of poignant discomfort to him. It clung to him after he took a final leave of school in the autumn of 1747, and went to reside with his brother Lawrence at Mount Vernon. Here he continued his mathematical studies and his practice in surveying, disturbed at times by recurrences of his unlucky passion. Though by no means of a poetical temperament, the waste pages of his journal betray several attempts to pour forth his amorous sorrows in verse. They are mere commonplace rhymes, such as lovers at his age are apt to write, in which he bewails his "poor restless heart, wounded by Cupid's dart," and "bleeding for one who remains pitiless of his griefs and woes."

The tenor of some of his verses induce us to believe that

he never told his love; but as we have already surmised, was prevented by his bashfulness.

> "Ah, woe is me, that I should love and conceal;
> Long have I wished and never dare reveal."

It is difficult to reconcile one's self to the idea of the cool and sedate Washington, the great champion of American liberty, a woe-worn lover in his youthful days, "sighing like furnace," and inditing plaintive verses about the groves of Mount Vernon. We are glad of an opportunity, however, of penetrating to his native feelings, and finding that under his studied decorum and reserve he had a heart of flesh throbbing with the warm impulses of human nature.

Being a favourite of Sir William Fairfax, he was now an occasional inmate of Belvoir. Among the persons at present residing there was Thomas, Lord Fairfax, cousin of William Fairfax, and of whose immense landed property the latter was the agent. As this nobleman was one of Washington's earliest friends, and in some degree the founder of his fortunes, his character and history are worthy of especial note.

Lord Fairfax was now nearly sixty years of age, upwards of six feet high, gaunt and raw-boned, near-sighted, with light grey eyes, sharp features, and an aquiline nose. However ungainly his present appearance, he had figured to advantage in London life in his younger days. He had received his education at the University of Oxford, where he acquitted himself with credit. He afterwards held a commission, and remained for some time in a regiment of horse called the Blues. His title and connections, of course, gave him access to the best society, in which he acquired additional currency by contributing a paper or two to Addison's Spectator, then in great vogue.

In the height of his fashionable career, he became strongly attached to a young lady of rank; paid his addresses, and was accepted. The wedding-day was fixed; the wedding-dresses were provided; together with servants and equipages for the matrimonial establishment. Suddenly the lady broke her engagement. She had been dazzled by the superior brilliancy of a ducal coronet.

It was a cruel blow, alike to the affection and pride of Lord Fairfax, and wrought a change in both character and conduct. From that time he almost avoided the sex, and became shy and embarrassed in their society, excepting among those with whom he was connected or particularly intimate. This may have been among the reasons which ultimately induced him to abandon the gay world and bury himself in the wilds of America. He made a voyage to Virginia about the year 1739, to visit his vast estates there. These he inherited from his mother, Catherine, daughter of Thomas, Lord Culpepper, to whom they had been granted by Charles II. The original grant was for all the lands lying between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers; meaning thereby, it is said, merely the territory on the northern neck, east of the Blue Ridge. His lordship, however, discovering that the Potomac headed in the Allegany Mountains, returned to England and claimed a correspondent definition of his grant. It was arranged by compromise; extending his domain into the Allegany Mountains, and comprising, among other lands, a great portion of the Shenandoah Valley.

Lord Fairfax had been delighted with his visit to Virginia. The amenity of the climate, the magnificence of the forest scenery, the abundance of game, all pointed it out as a favoured land. He was pleased, too, with the frank, cordial character of the Virginians, and their independent mode of life; and returned to it with the resolution of taking up his abode there for the remainder of his days. His early disappointment in love was the cause of some eccentricities in his conduct; yet he was amiable and courteous in his manners, and of a liberal and generous spirit.

Another inmate of Belvoir at this time was George William Fairfax, about twenty-two years of age, the eldest son of the proprietor. He had been educated in England, and since his return had married the daughter of Colonel Carey, of Hampton, on James River. He had recently brought home his bride and her sister to his father's house.

The merits of Washington were known and appreciated by the Fairfax family. Though not quite sixteen years of age, he no longer seemed a boy, nor was he treated as such.

Tall, athletic, and manly for his years, his early self-training, and the code of conduct he had devised, gave a gravity and decision to his conduct; his frankness and modesty inspired cordial regard; and the melancholy, of which he speaks, may have produced a softness in his manner calculated to win favour in ladies' eyes. According to his own account, the female society by which he was surrounded had a soothing effect on that melancholy. The charms of Miss Carey, the sister of the bride, seem even to have caused a slight fluttering in his bosom; which, however, was constantly rebuked by the remembrance of his former passion—so at least we judge from letters to his youthful confidants, rough drafts of which are still to be seen in his tell-tale journal.

To one whom he addresses as his dear friend Robin, he writes: "My residence is at present at his lordship's, where I might, was my heart disengaged, pass my time very pleasantly, as there's a very agreeable young lady lives in the same house (Col. George Fairfax's wife's sister); but as that's only adding fuel to fire, it makes me the more uneasy, for by often and unavoidably being in company with her, revives my former passion for your lowland beauty; whereas was I to live more retired from young women, I might in some measure alleviate my sorrows, by burying that chaste and troublesome passion in the grave of oblivion," &c.

Similar avowals he makes to another of his young correspondents, whom he styles, "Dear friend John;" as also to a female confidante, styled "Dear Sally," to whom he acknowledges that the company of the "very agreeable young lady, sister-in-law of Col. George Fairfax," in a great measure cheers his sorrow and dejectedness.

The object of this early passion is not positively known. Tradition states that the "lowland beauty" was a Miss Grimes, of Westmoreland, afterwards Mrs. Lee, and mother of General Henry Lee, who figured in revolutionary history as Light-Horse Harry, and was always a favourite with Washington, probably from the recollection of his early tenderness for the mother.

Whatever may have been the soothing effect of the female society by which he was surrounded at Belvoir, the youth

found a more effectual remedy for his love melancholy in the company of Lord Fairfax. His lordship was a stanch foxhunter, and kept horses and hounds in the English style. The hunting season had arrived. The neighbourhood abounded with sport; but foxhunting in Virginia required bold and skilful horsemanship. He found Washington bold as himself in the saddle, and as eager to follow the hounds. He forthwith took him into peculiar favour; made him his hunting companion; and it was probably under the tuition of this hard-riding old nobleman that the youth imbibed that fondness for the chase for which he was afterwards remarked.

Their foxhunting intercourse was attended with more important results. His lordship's possessions beyond the Blue Ridge had never been regularly settled nor surveyed. Lawless intruders—squatters, as they were called—were planting themselves along the finest streams and in the richest valleys, and virtually taking possession of the country. It was the anxious desire of Lord Fairfax to have these lands examined, surveyed, and portioned out into lots, preparatory to ejecting these interlopers or bringing them to reasonable terms. In Washington, notwithstanding his youth, he beheld one fit for the task—having noticed the exercises in surveying which he kept up while at Mount Vernon, and the aptness and exactness with which every process was executed. He was well calculated, too, by his vigour and activity, his courage and hardihood, to cope with the wild country to be surveyed, and with its still wilder inhabitants. The proposition had only to be offered to Washington to be eagerly accepted. It was the very kind of occupation for which he had been diligently training himself. All the preparations required by one of his simple habits were soon made, and in a very few days he was ready for his first expedition into the wilderness.

CHAPTER IV.

Expedition beyond the Blue Ridge—The Valley of the Shenandoah—Lord Halifax—Lodge in the Wilderness—Surveying—Life in the Backwoods—Indians—War-dance—German Settlers—Return home—Washington as Public Surveyor—Sojourn at Greenway Court—Horses, Hounds, and Books—Rugged Experience among the Mountains.

It was in the month of March (1748), and just after he had completed his sixteenth year, that Washington set out on horseback on this surveying expedition, in company with George William Fairfax. Their route lay by Ashley's Gap, a pass through the Blue Ridge, that beautiful line of mountains which, as yet, almost formed the western frontier of inhabited Virginia. Winter still lingered on the tops of the mountains, whence melting snows sent down torrents, which swelled the rivers and occasionally rendered them almost impassable. Spring, however, was softening the lower features of the landscape and smiling in the valleys.

They entered the great valley of Virginia, where it is about twenty-five miles wide; a lovely and temperate region, diversified by gentle swells and slopes, admirably adapted to cultivation. The Blue Ridge bounds it on one side, the North Mountain, a ridge of the Alleganies, on the other; while through it flows that bright and abounding river, which, on account of its surpassing beauty, was named by the Indians the Shenandoah—that is to say, "the daughter of the stars."

The first station of the travellers was at a kind of lodge in the wilderness, where the steward or land-bailiff of Lord Halifax resided, with such negroes as were required for farming purposes, and which Washington terms "his lordship's quarter." It was situated not far from the Shenandoah, and about twelve miles from the site of the present town of Winchester.

In a diary kept with his usual minuteness, Washington speaks with delight of the beauty of the trees and the richness of the land in the neighbourhood, and of his riding through a noble grove of sugar-maples on the banks of the

Shenandoah; and at the present day, the magnificence of the forests which still exist in this favoured region justifies his eulogium.

He looked around, however, with an eye to the profitable rather than the poetical. The gleam of poetry and romance, inspired by his "lowland beauty," occurs no more. The real business of life has commenced with him. His diary affords no food for fancy. Everything is practical. The qualities of the soil, the relative value of sites and localities, are faithfully recorded. In these his early habits of observation and his exercises in surveying had already made him a proficient.

His surveys commenced in the lower part of the valley, some distance above the junction of the Shenandoah with the Potomac, and extended for many miles along the former river. Here and there partial "clearings" had been made by squatters and hardy pioneers, and their rude husbandry had produced abundant crops of grain, hemp, and tobacco; civilization, however, had hardly yet entered the valley, if we may judge from the note of a night's lodging at the house of one of the settlers—Captain Hite, near the site of the present town of Winchester. Here, after supper, most of the company stretched themselves in backwood style, before the fire; but Washington was shown into a bedroom. Fatigued with a hard day's work at surveying, he soon undressed; but instead of being nestled between sheets in a comfortable bed, as at the maternal home or at Mount Vernon, he found himself on a couch of matted straw, under a threadbare blanket, swarming with unwelcome bedfellows. After tossing about for a few moments, he was glad to put on his clothes again, and rejoin his companions before the fire.

Such was his first experience of life in the wilderness: he soon, however, accustomed himself to "rough it," and adapt himself to fare of all kinds, though he generally preferred a bivouac before a fire, in the open air, to the accommodations of a woodman's cabin. Proceeding down the valley to the banks of the Potomac, they found that river so much swollen by the rain which had fallen among the Alleganies, as to be unfordable. To while away the time until it should subside, they made an excursion to examine

certain warm springs in a valley among the mountains, since called the Berkeley Springs. There they camped out at night, under the stars: the diary makes no complaint of their accommodations; and their camping-ground is now known as Bath, one of the favourite watering-places of Virginia. One of the warm springs was subsequently appropriated by Lord Fairfax to his own use, and still bears his name.

After watching in vain for the river to subside, they procured a canoe, on which they crossed to the Maryland side; swimming their horses. A weary day's ride of forty miles up the left side of the river, in a continual rain, and over what Washington pronounces the worst road ever trod by man or beast, brought them to the house of a Colonel Cresap, opposite the south branch of the Potomac, where they put up for the night.

Here they were detained three or four days by inclement weather. On the second day they were surprised by the appearance of a war party of thirty Indians, bearing a scalp as a trophy. A little liquor procured the spectacle of a war-dance. A large space was cleared, and a fire made in the centre, round which the warriors took their seats. The principal orator made a speech, reciting their recent exploits, and rousing them to triumph. One of the warriors started up as if from sleep, and began a series of movements, half-grotesque, half-tragical; the rest followed. For music, one savage drummed on a deerskin, stretched over a pot half filled with water; another rattled a gourd, containing a few shot, and decorated with a horse's tail. Their strange outcries, and uncouth forms and garbs, seen by the glare of the fire, and their whoops and yells, made them appear more like demons than human beings. All this savage gambol was no novelty to Washington's companions, experienced in frontier life; but to the youth, fresh from school, it was a strange spectacle, which he sat contemplating with deep interest, and carefully noted down in his journal. It will be found that he soon made himself acquainted with the savage character, and became expert at dealing with these inhabitants of the wilderness.

From this encampment the party proceeded to the mouth of Patterson's Creek, where they recrossed the river in a

canoe, swimming their horses as before. More than two weeks were now passed by them in the wild mountainous regions of Frederick County, and about the south branch of the Potomac, surveying lands and laying out lots, camped out the greater part of the time, and subsisting on wild turkeys and other game. Each one was his own cook; forked sticks served for spits, and chips of wood for dishes. The weather was unsettled. At one time their tent was blown down; at another they were driven out of it by smoke; now they were drenched with rain, and now the straw on which Washington was sleeping caught fire, and he was awakened by a companion just in time to escape a scorching.

The only variety to this camp life was a supper at the house of one Solomon Hedge, Esquire, his majesty's justice of the peace, where there were no forks at table, nor any knives, but such as the guests brought in their pockets. During their surveys they were followed by numbers of people, some of them squatters, anxious, doubtless, to procure a cheap title to the land they had appropriated; others, German emigrants, with their wives and children, seeking a new home in the wilderness. Most of the latter could not speak English; but when spoken to, answered in their native tongue. They appeared to Washington ignorant as Indians, and uncouth, but "merry, and full of antic tricks." Such were the progenitors of the sturdy yeomanry now inhabiting those parts, many of whom still preserve their strong German characteristics.

"I have not slept above three or four nights in a bed," writes Washington to one of his young friends at home; "but after walking a good deal all the day, I have lain down before the fire upon a little straw or fodder, or a bear-skin, whichever was to be had, with man, wife, and children, like dogs and cats; and happy is he who gets the berth nearest the fire."

Having completed his surveys, he set forth from the south branch of the Potomac on his return homeward; crossed the mountains to the great Cacapehon; traversed the Shenandoah valley; passed through the Blue Ridge, and, on the 12th of April, found himself once more at Mount Vernon. For his services he received, according to

his note-book, a doubloon per day when actively employed, and sometimes six pistoles.[1]

The manner in which he had acquitted himself in this arduous expedition, and his accounts of the country surveyed, gave great satisfaction to Lord Fairfax, who shortly afterwards moved across the Blue Ridge, and took up his residence at the place heretofore noted as his "quarters." Here he laid out a manor, containing ten thousand acres of arable and grazing lands, vast meadows, and noble forests, and projected a spacious manor-house, giving to the place the name of Greenway Court.

It was probably through the influence of Lord Fairfax that Washington received the appointment of public surveyor. This conferred authority on his surveys, and entitled them to be recorded in the county offices, and so invariably correct have these surveys been found, that to this day, wherever any of them stand on record, they receive implicit credit.

For three years he continued in this occupation, which proved extremely profitable, from the vast extent of country to be surveyed and the very limited number of public surveyors. It made him acquainted also with the country, the nature of the soil in various parts, and the value of localities; all which proved advantageous to him in his purchases in after years. Many of the finest parts of the Shenandoah valley are yet owned by members of the Washington family.

While thus employed for months at a time surveying the lands beyond the Blue Ridge, he was often an inmate of Greenway Court. The projected manor-house was never even commenced. On a green knoll overshadowed by trees was a long stone building one story in height, with dormar windows, two wooden belfries, chimneys studded with swallow and martin coops, and a roof sloping down, in the old Virginia fashion, into low projecting eaves that formed a verandah the whole length of the house. It was probably the house originally occupied by his steward or land agent, but was now devoted to hospitable purposes and the reception of guests. As to his lordship, it was one

[1] A pistole is 3 dolls. 60 cents. A doubloon is double that sum.

of his many eccentricities that he never slept in the main edifice, but lodged apart in a wooden house not much above twelve feet square. In a small building was his office, where quitrents were given, deeds drawn, and business transacted with his tenants.

About the knoll were outhouses for his numerous servants, black and white, with stables for saddle-horses and hunters, and kennels for his hounds; for his lordship retained his keen hunting propensities, and the neighbourhood abounded in game. Indians, half-breeds, and leathern-clad woodsmen loitered about the place, and partook of the abundance of the kitchen. His lordship's table was plentiful but plain, and served in the English fashion.

Here Washington had full opportunity, in the proper seasons, of indulging his fondness for field sports, and once more accompanying his lordship in the chase. The conversation of Lord Fairfax, too, was full of interest and instruction to an inexperienced youth, from his cultivated talents, his literary taste, and his past intercourse with the best society of Europe, and its most distinguished authors. He had brought books, too, with him into the wilderness, and from Washington's diary we find that during his sojourn here he was diligently reading the history of England, and the essays of the Spectator.

Such was Greenway Court in these its palmy days. We visited it recently and found it tottering to its fall, mouldering in the midst of a magnificent country, where nature still flourishes in full luxuriance and beauty.

Three or four years were thus passed by Washington, the greater part of the time beyond the Blue Ridge, but occasionally with his brother Lawrence at Mount Vernon. His rugged and toilsome expeditions in the mountains, among rude scenes and rough people, inured him to hardships, and made him apt at expedients; while his intercourse with his cultivated brother, and with the various members of the Fairfax family, had a happy effect in toning up his mind and manners, and counteracting the careless and self-indulgent habitudes of the wilderness.

CHAPTER V.

English and French Claims to the Ohio Valley—Wild state of the Country—Projects of Settlements—The Ohio Company—Enlightened Views of Lawrence Washington—French Rivalry—Celeron de Bienville—His Signs of Occupation—Hugh Crawford—George Croghan, a Veteran Trader, and Montour, his Interpreter—Their Mission from Pennsylvania to the Ohio Tribes—Christopher Gist, the Pioneer of the Yadkin, Agent of the Ohio Company—His Expedition to the Frontier—Reprobate Traders at Logstown—Negotiations with the Indians—Scenes in the Ohio Country—Diplomacy at Picqua—Kegs of Brandy and Rolls of Tobacco—Gist's Return across Kentucky—A Deserted Home—French Schemes—Captain Joncaire, a Diplomat of the Wilderness—His Speech at Logstown—The Indians' Land, "Where?"

During the time of Washington's surveying campaigns among the mountains, a grand colonizing scheme had been set on foot, destined to enlist him in hardy enterprises, and in some degree to shape the course of his future fortunes.

The treaty of peace concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle, which had put an end to the general war of Europe, had left undefined the boundaries between the British and French possessions in America; a singular remissness, considering that they had long been a subject in dispute, and a cause of frequent conflicts in the colonies. Immense regions were still claimed by both nations, and each was now eager to forestall the other by getting possession of them, and strengthening its claim by occupancy.

The most desirable of these regions lay west of the Allegany Mountains, extending from the lakes to the Ohio, and embracing the valley of that river and its tributary streams. An immense territory, possessing a salubrious climate, fertile soil, fine hunting and fishing grounds, and facilities by lakes and rivers for a vast internal commerce.

The French claimed all this country quite to the Allegany Mountains by the right of discovery. In 1673, Padre Marquette, with his companion, Joliet, of Quebec, both subjects of the crown of France, had passed down the Mississippi in a canoe quite to the Arkansas, thereby, according to an alleged maxim in the law of nations, esta-

blishing the right of their sovereign, not merely to the river so discovered and its adjacent lands, but to all the country drained by its tributary streams, of which the Ohio was one; a claim, the ramifications of which might be spread, like the meshes of a web, over half the continent.

To this illimitable claim the English opposed a right derived, at second hand, from a traditionary Indian conquest. A treaty, they said, had been made at Lancaster, in 1744, between commissioners from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, and the Iroquois, or Six Nations, whereby the latter, for four hundred pounds, gave up all right and title to the land west of the Allegany Mountains, even to the Mississippi, which land, *according to their traditions*, had been conquered by their forefathers.

It is undoubtedly true that such a treaty was made, and such a pretended transfer of title did take place, under the influence of spirituous liquors; but it is equally true that the Indians in question did not, at the time, possess an acre of the land conveyed; and that the tribes actually in possession scoffed at their pretensions, and claimed the country as their own from time immemorial.

Such were the shadowy foundations of claims which the two nations were determined to maintain to the uttermost, and which ripened into a series of wars, ending in a loss to England of a great part of her American possessions, and to France of the whole.

As yet in the region in question there was not a single white settlement. Mixed Iroquois tribes of Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingoes, had migrated into it early in the century from the French settlements in Canada, and taken up their abodes about the Ohio and its branches. The French pretended to hold them under their protection; but their allegiance, if ever acknowledged, had been sapped of late years by the influx of fur traders from Pennsylvania. These were often rough, lawless men; half Indians in dress and habits, prone to brawls, and sometimes deadly in their feuds. They were generally in the employ of some trader, who, at the head of his retainers and a string of pack-horses, would make his way over mountains and through forests to the banks of the Ohio, establish his

head-quarters in some Indian town, and disperse his followers to traffic among the hamlets, hunting camps, and wigwams, exchanging blankets, gaudy-coloured cloth, trinketry, powder, shot, and rum, for valuable furs and peltry. In this way a lucrative trade with these western tribes was springing up and becoming monopolized by the Pennsylvanians.

To secure a participation in this trade, and to gain a foothold in this desirable region, became now the wish of some of the most intelligent and enterprising men of Virginia and Maryland, among whom were Lawrence and Augustine Washington. With these views they projected a scheme, in connection with John Hanbury, a wealthy London merchant, to obtain a grant of land from the British government, for the purpose of forming settlements or colonies beyond the Alleganies. Government readily countenanced a scheme by which French encroachments might be forestalled, and prompt and quiet possession secured of the great Ohio valley. An association was accordingly chartered in 1749, by the name of "the Ohio Company," and five hundred thousand acres of land were granted to it west of the Alleganies, between the Monongahela and Kanawha rivers; though part of the land might be taken up north of the Ohio, should it be deemed expedient. The company were to pay no quitrent for ten years, but they were to select two-fifths of their lands immediately; to settle one hundred families upon them within seven years; to build a fort at their own expense, and maintain a sufficient garrison in it for defence against the Indians.

Mr. Thomas Lee, president of the council of Virginia, took the lead in the concerns of the company at the outset, and by many has been considered its founder. On his death, which soon took place, Lawrence Washington had the chief management. His enlightened mind and liberal spirit shone forth in his earliest arrangements. He wished to form the settlements with Germans from Pennsylvania. Being dissenters, however, they would be obliged, on becoming residents within the jurisdiction of Virginia, to pay parish rates, and maintain a clergyman of the church of England, though they might not understand his lan-

guage nor relish his doctrines. Lawrence sought to have them exempted from this double tax on purse and conscience.

"It has ever been my opinion," said he, "and I hope it ever will be, that restraints on conscience are cruel in regard to those on whom they are imposed, and injurious to the country imposing them. England, Holland, and Prussia I may quote as examples, and much more Pennsylvania, which has flourished under that delightful liberty, so as to become the admiration of every man who considers the short time it has been settled. * * * * This colony (Virginia) was greatly settled in the latter part of Charles the First's time, and during the usurpation, by the zealous churchmen; and that spirit, which was then brought in, has ever since continued; so that, except a few Quakers, we have no dissenters. But what has been the consequence? We have increased by slow degrees, whilst our neighbouring colonies, whose natural advantages are greatly inferior to ours, have become populous."

Such were the enlightened views of this brother of our Washington, to whom the latter owed much of his moral and mental training. The company proceeded to make preparations for their colonizing scheme. Goods were imported from England suited to the Indian trade, or for presents to the chiefs. Rewards were promised to veteran warriors and hunters among the natives acquainted with the woods and mountains, for the best route to the Ohio. Before the company had received its charter, however, the French were in the field. Early in 1749, the Marquis de la Galessonniere, governor of Canada, despatched Celeron de Bienville, an intelligent officer, at the head of three hundred men, to the banks of the Ohio, to make peace, as he said, between the tribes that had become embroiled with each other during the late war, and to renew the French possession of the country. Celeron de Bienville distributed presents among the Indians, made speeches reminding them of former friendship, and warned them not to trade with the English.

He furthermore nailed leaden plates to trees, and buried others in the earth, at the confluence of the Ohio and its tributaries, bearing inscriptions purporting that all the

lands on both sides of the rivers to their sources appertained, as in foregone times, to the crown of France.[1] The Indians gazed at these mysterious plates with wondering eyes, but surmised their purport. "They mean to steal our country from us," murmured they, and they determined to seek protection from the English.

Celeron finding some traders from Pennsylvania trafficking among the Indians, he summoned them to depart, and wrote by them to James Hamilton, governor of Pennsylvania, telling him the object of his errand to those parts, and his surprise at meeting with English traders in a country to which England had no pretensions; intimating that, in future, any intruders of the kind would be rigorously dealt with.

His letter, and a report of his proceedings on the Ohio, roused the solicitude of the governor and council of Pennsylvania for the protection of their Indian trade. Shortly afterwards, one Hugh Crawford, who had been trading with the Miami tribes on the Wabash, brought a message from them, speaking of the promises and threats with which the French were endeavouring to shake their faith, but assuring the governor that their friendship for the English "would last while the sun and moon ran round the world." This message was accompanied by three strings of wampum.

Governor Hamilton knew the value of Indian friendship, and suggested to the assembly that it would be better to clinch it with presents, and that as soon as possible. An envoy accordingly was sent off early in October, who was supposed to have great influence among the western tribes. This was one George Croghan, a veteran trader, shrewd and sagacious, who had been frequently to the Ohio country with pack-horses and followers, and made himself popular among the Indians by dispensing presents with a lavish hand. He was accompanied by Andrew Montour, a Canadian of half Indian descent, who was to act as interpreter. They were provided with a small present for the emergency; but were to convoke a meeting of all the tribes at Logstown, on the Ohio, early in the ensuing spring,

[1] One of these plates, bearing date August 16, 1749, was found in recent years at the confluence of the Muskingum with the Ohio.

to receive an ample present which would be provided by the assembly.

It was some time later in the same autumn that the Ohio Company brought their plans into operation, and despatched an agent to explore the lands upon the Ohio and its branches as low as the Great Falls, take note of their fitness for cultivation, of the passes of the mountains, the courses and bearings of the rivers, and the strength and disposition of the native tribes. The man chosen for the purpose was Christopher Gist, a hardy pioneer, experienced in woodcraft and Indian life, who had his home on the banks of the Yadkin, near the boundary line of Virginia and North Carolina. He was allowed a woodsman or two for the service of the expedition. He set out on the 31st of October, from the banks of the Potomac, by an Indian path which the hunters had pointed out, leading from Wills' Creek, since called Cumberland River, to the Ohio. Indian paths and buffalo tracks are the primitive highways of the wilderness. Passing the Juniata, he crossed the ridges of the Allegany, arrived at Shannopin, a Delaware village on the south-east side of the Ohio, or rather of that upper branch of it now called the Allegany, swam his horses across that river, and, descending along its valley, arrived at Logstown, an important Indian village a little below the site of the present city of Pittsburg. Here usually resided Tanacharisson, a Seneca chief of great note, being head sachem of the mixed tribes who had migrated to the Ohio and its branches. He was generally surnamed the Half-king, being subordinate to the Iroquois confederacy. The chief was absent at this time, as were most of his people, it being the hunting season. George Croghan, the envoy from Pennsylvania, with Montour his interpreter, had passed through Logstown a week previously, on his way to the Twightwees and other tribes on the Miami branch of the Ohio. Scarce any one was to be seen about the village but some of Croghan's rough people whom he had left behind—"reprobate Indian traders," as Gist terms them. They regarded the latter with a jealous eye, suspecting him of some rivalship in trade, or designs on the Indian lands; and intimated significantly that "he would never go home safe."

Gist knew the meaning of such hints from men of this stamp in the lawless depths of the wilderness; but quieted their suspicions by letting them know that he was on public business, and on good terms with their great man, George Croghan, to whom he despatched a letter. He took his departure from Logstown, however, as soon as possible, preferring, as he said, the solitude of the wilderness to such company.

At Beaver Creek, a few miles below the village, he left the river and struck into the interior of the present State of Ohio. Here he overtook George Croghan at Muskingum, a town of Wyandots and Mingoes. He had ordered all the traders in his employ who were scattered among the Indian villages to rally at this town, where he had hoisted the English flag over his residence and over that of the sachem. This was in consequence of the hostility of the French, who had recently captured, in the neighbourhood, three white men in the employ of Frazier, an Indian trader, and had carried them away prisoners to Canada.

Gist was well received by the people of Muskingum. They were indignant at the French violation of their territories, and the capture of their "English brothers." They had not forgotten the conduct of Celeron de Bienville in the previous year, and the mysterious plates which he had nailed against trees and sunk in the ground. "If the French claim the rivers which run into the lakes," said they, "those which run into the Ohio belong to us and to our brothers the English." And they were anxious that Gist should settle among them, and build a fort for their mutual defence.

A council of the nation was now held, in which Gist invited them, in the name of the Governor of Virginia, to visit that province, where a large present of goods awaited them, sent by their father, the great king, over the water to his Ohio children. The invitation was graciously received, but no answer could be given until a grand council of the western tribes had been held, which was to take place at Logstown in the ensuing spring.

Similar results attended visits made by Gist and Croghan to the Delawares and the Shawnees at their villages about the Scioto River; all promised to be at the gathering at

Logstown. From the Shawnee village, near the mouth of the Scioto, the two emissaries shaped their course north two hundred miles, crossed the Great Moneami, or Miami River, on a raft, swimming their horses; and on the 17th of February arrived at the Indian town of Piqua.

These journeyings had carried Gist about a wide extent of country beyond the Ohio. It was rich and level, watered with streams and rivulets, and clad with noble forests of hickory, walnut, ash, poplar, sugar-maple, and wild cherry trees. Occasionally there were spacious plains covered with wild rye; natural meadows with blue grass and clover, and buffaloes, thirty and forty at a time, grazing on them as in a cultivated pasture. Deer, elk, and wild turkeys abounded. "Nothing is wanting but cultivation," says Gist, "to make this a most delightful country." Cultivation has since proved the truth of his words. The country thus described is the present State of Ohio.

Picqua, where Gist and Croghan had arrived, was the principal town of the Twightwees or Miamis, the most powerful confederacy of the West, combining four tribes, and extending its influence even beyond the Mississippi. A king or sachem of one or other of the different tribes presided over the whole. The head chief at present was the king of the Piankeshas.

At this town Croghan formed a treaty of alliance, in the name of the Governor of Pennsylvania, with two of the Miami tribes; and Gist was promised by the king of the Piankeshas that the chiefs of the various tribes would attend the meeting at Logstown to make a treaty with Virginia.

In the height of these demonstrations of friendship, two Ottawas entered the council-house, announcing themselves as envoys from the French Governor of Canada to seek a renewal of ancient alliance. They were received with all due ceremonial—for none are more ceremonious than the Indians. The French colours were set up beside the English, and the ambassadors opened their mission. "Your father, the French king," said they, "remembering his children on the Ohio, has sent them these two kegs of milk"—here, with great solemnity, they deposited two

kegs of brandy—" and this tobacco "—here they deposited a roll ten pounds in weight. " He has made a clear road for you to come and see him and his officers; and urges you to come, assuring you that all past differences will be forgotten."

The Piankesha chief replied in the same figurative style: " It is true our father has sent for us several times, and has said the road was clear; but I understand it is not clear—it is foul and bloody, and the French have made it so. We have cleared a road for our brothers, the English; the French have made it bad, and have taken some of our brothers prisoners. This we consider as done to ourselves." So saying, he turned his back upon the ambassadors, and stalked out of the council-house.

In the end, the ambassadors were assured that the tribes of the Ohio and the Six Nations were hand in hand with their brothers, the English; and should war ensue with the French, they were ready to meet it.

So the French colours were taken down; the " kegs of milk " and roll of tobacco were rejected; the grand council broke up with a war-dance, and the ambassadors departed, weeping and howling, and predicting ruin to the Miamis.

When Gist returned to the Shawnee town, near the mouth of the Scioto, and reported to his Indian friends there the alliance he had formed with the Miami confederacy, there was great feasting and speech-making and firing of guns. He had now happily accomplished the chief objects of his mission—nothing remained but to descend the Ohio to the Great Falls. This, however, he was cautioned not to do. A large party of Indians, allies of the French, were hunting in that neighbourhood, who might kill or capture him. He crossed the river, attended only by a lad as a travelling companion and aid, and proceeded cautiously down the east side until within fifteen miles of the Falls. Here he came upon traps newly set, and Indian footprints not a day old, and heard the distant report of guns. The story of Indian hunters then was true. He was in a dangerous neighbourhood. The savages might come upon the tracks of his horses, or hear the bells put about their necks when turned loose in the wilderness to graze.

Abandoning all idea, therefore, of visiting the Falls, and contenting himself with the information concerning them which he had received from others, he shaped his course, on the 18th of March, for the Cuttawa, or Kentucky River. From the top of a mountain in the vicinity he had a view to the south-west, as far as the eye could reach, over a vast woodland country in the fresh garniture of spring, and watered by abundant streams; but as yet only the hunting-ground of savage tribes, and the scene of their sanguinary combats. In a word, Kentucky lay spread out before him in all its wild magnificence, long before it was beheld by Daniel Boone.

For six weeks was this hardy pioneer making his toilful way up the valley of the Cuttawa, or Kentucky River, to the banks of the Blue Stone; often checked by precipices, and obliged to seek fords at the heads of tributary streams; and happy when he could find a buffalo path broken through the tangled forests, or worn into the everlasting rocks.

On the 1st of May he climbed a rock sixty feet high, crowning a lofty mountain, and had a distant view of the great Kanawha breaking its way through a vast sierra; crossing that river on a raft of his own construction, he had many more weary days before him, before he reached his frontier abode on the banks of the Yadkin. He arrived there in the latter part of May, but there was no one to welcome the wanderer home. There had been an Indian massacre in the neighbourhood, and he found his house silent and deserted. His heart sank within him, until an old man, whom he met near the place, assured him his family were safe, having fled for refuge to a settlement thirty-five miles off, on the banks of the Roanoke. There he rejoined them on the following day.

While Gist had been making his painful way homeward, the two Ottawa ambassadors had returned to Fort Sandusky, bringing word to the French that their flag had been struck in the council-house at Picqua, and their friendship rejected and their hostility defied by the Miamis. They informed them also of the gathering of the western tribes that was to take place at Logstown, to conclude a treaty with the Virginians.

It was a great object with the French to prevent this treaty, and to spirit up the Ohio Indians against the English. This they hoped to effect through the agency of one Captain Joncaire, a veteran diplomatist of the wilderness, whose character and story deserve a passing notice.

He had been taken prisoner when quite young by the Iroquois, and adopted into one of their tribes. This was the making of his fortune. He had grown up among them, acquired their language, adapted himself to their habits, and was considered by them as one of themselves. On returning to civilised life he became a prime instrument in the hands of the Canadian government, for managing and cajoling the Indians. Sometimes he was an ambassador to the Iroquois; sometimes a mediator between their jarring tribes; sometimes a leader of their warriors when employed by the French. When in 1728 the Delawares and Shawnees migrated to the banks of the Ohio, Joncaire was the agent who followed them, and prevailed on them to consider themselves under French protection. When the French wanted to get a commanding site for a post on the Iroquois lands, near Niagara, Joncaire was the man to manage it. He craved a situation where he might put up a wigwam, and dwell among his Iroquois brethren. It was granted of course, "for was he not a son of the tribe—was he not one of themselves?" By degrees his wigwam grew into an important trading post; ultimately it became Fort Niagara. Years and years had elapsed; he had grown grey in Indian diplomacy, and was now sent once more to maintain French sovereignty over the valley of the Ohio.

He appeared at Logstown, accompanied by another Frenchman and forty Iroquois warriors. He found an assemblage of the western tribes, feasting and rejoicing, and firing of guns, for George Croghan and Montour the interpreter were there, and had been distributing presents on behalf of the Governor of Pennsylvania.

Joncaire was said to have the wit of a Frenchman, and the eloquence of an Iroquois. He made an animated speech to the chiefs in their own tongue, the gist of which was that their father Onontio (that is to say, the

Governor of Canada) desired his children of the Ohio to turn away the Indian traders, and never to deal with them again on pain of his displeasure; so saying, he laid down a wampum belt of uncommon size, by way of emphasis to his message.

For once his eloquence was of no avail; a chief rose indignantly, shook his finger in his face, and stamping on the ground, "This is our land," said he. "What right has Onontio here? The English are our brothers. They shall live among us as long as one of us is alive. We will trade with them and not with you;" and so saying he rejected the belt of wampum.

Joncaire returned to an advanced post recently established on the upper part of the river, whence he wrote to the Governor of Pennsylvania: "The Marquis de la Jonquiere, Governor of New France, having ordered me to watch that the English make no treaty in the Ohio country, I have signified to the traders of your government to retire. You are not ignorant that all these lands belong to the King of France, and that the English have no right to trade in them." He concluded by reiterating the threat made two years previously by Celeron de Bienville against all intruding fur traders.

In the meantime, in the face of all these protests and menaces, Mr. Gist, under sanction of the Virginia Legislature, proceeded in the same year to survey the lands within the grant of the Ohio Company, lying on the south side of the Ohio river, as far down as the great Kanawha. An old Delaware sachem, meeting him while thus employed, propounded a somewhat puzzling question. "The French," said he, "claim all the land on one side of the Ohio, the English claim all the land on the other side—now where does the Indians' land lie?"

Poor savages! Between their "fathers," the French, and their "brothers," the English, they were in a fair way of being most lovingly shared out of the whole country.

CHAPTER VI.

Preparations for Hostilities—Washington appointed District Adjutant-General—Mount Vernon a School of Arms—Adjutant Muse a veteran Campaigner—Jacob Van Braam the Master of Fence—Ill-health of Washington's Brother Lawrence—Voyage with him to the West Indies—Scenes at Barbadoes—Beefsteak and Tripe Club—Return home of Washington—Death of Lawrence.

THE French now prepared for hostile contingencies. They launched an armed vessel of unusual size on Lake Ontario; fortified their trading house at Niagara; strengthened their outposts, and advanced others on the upper waters of the Ohio. A stir of warlike preparation was likewise to be observed among the British colonies. It was evident that the adverse claims to the disputed territories, if pushed home, could only be settled by the stern arbitrament of the sword.

In Virginia, especially, the war spirit was manifest. The province was divided into military districts, each having an adjutant-general, with the rank of major, and the pay of one hundred and fifty pounds a year, whose duty was to attend to the organization and equipment of the militia.

Such an appointment was sought by Lawrence Washington for his brother George. It shows what must have been the maturity of mind of the latter, and the confidence inspired by his judicious conduct and aptness for business, that the post should not only be sought for him, but readily obtained, though he was but nineteen years of age. He proved himself worthy of the appointment.

He now set about preparing himself, with his usual method and assiduity, for his new duties. Virginia had among its floating population some military relics of the late Spanish war. Among these was a certain Adjutant Muse, a Westmoreland volunteer, who had served with Lawrence Washington in the campaigns in the West Indies, and been with him in the attack on Carthagena. He now undertook to instruct his brother George in the art of war; lent him treatises on military tactics; put him through the manual exercise, and gave him some idea

of evolutions in the field. Another of Lawrence's campaigning comrades was Jacob Van Braam, a Dutchman by birth; a soldier of fortune of the Dalgetty order, who had been in the British army, but was now out of service, and, professing to be a complete master of fence, recruited his slender purse in this time of military excitement by giving the Virginian youth lessons in the sword exercise.

Under the instructions of these veterans, Mount Vernon, from being a quiet rural retreat, where Washington, three years previously, had indited love ditties to his "lowland beauty," was suddenly transformed into a school of arms, where he practised the manual exercise with Adjutant Muse, or took lessons on the broadsword from Van Braam.

His martial studies, however, were interrupted for a time by the critical state of his brother's health. The constitution of Lawrence had always been delicate, and he had been obliged repeatedly to travel for a change of air. There were now pulmonary symptoms of a threatening nature, and by advice of his physicians he determined to pass a winter in the West Indies, taking with him his favourite brother George as a companion.

They accordingly sailed for Barbadoes on the 28th September, 1751. George kept a journal of the voyage with logbook brevity; recording the wind and the weather, but no events worth citation. They landed at Barbadoes on the 3rd of November. The resident physician of the place gave a favourable report of Lawrence's case, and held out hopes of a cure. The brothers were delighted with the aspect of the country, as they drove out in the cool of the evening, and beheld on all sides fields of sugar-cane and Indian corn, and groves of tropical trees, in full fruit and foliage.

They took up their abode at a house pleasantly situated about a mile from town, commanding an extensive prospect of sea and land, including Carlisle Bay and its shipping, and belonging to Captain Crofton, commander of James Fort.

Barbadoes had its theatre, at which Washington witnessed for the first time a dramatic representation, a

species of amusement of which he afterwards became fond. It was in the present instance the doleful tragedy of George Barnwell. "The character of Barnwell, and several others," notes he in his journal, "were said to be well performed. There was music adapted and regularly conducted." A safe but abstemious criticism.

Among the hospitalities of the place the brothers were invited to the house of a Judge Maynards, to dine with an association of the first people of the place, who met at each other's house alternately every Saturday, under the incontestably English title of "The Beefsteak and Tripe Club." Washington notes with admiration the profusion of tropical fruits with which the table was loaded, "the granadilla, sapadella, pomegranate, sweet orange, water-melon, forbidden fruit, and guava." The homely prosaic beefsteak and tripe must have contrasted strangely, though sturdily, with these magnificent poetical fruits of the tropics. But John Bull is faithful to his native habits and native dishes, whatever may be the country or clime, and would set up a chophouse at the very gates of Paradise .

The brothers had scarcely been a fortnight at the island when George was taken down by a severe attack of small-pox. Skilful medical treatment, with the kind attention of friends, and especially of his brother, restored him to health in about three weeks ; but his face always remained slightly marked.

After his recovery he made excursions about the island, noticing its soil, productions, fortifications, public works, and the manners of its inhabitants. While admiring the productiveness of the sugar plantations, he was shocked at the spendthrift habits of the planters, and their utter want of management.

"How wonderful," writes he, "that such people should be in debt, and not be able to indulge themselves in all the luxuries, as well as the necessaries of life! Yet so it happens. Estates are often alienated for debts. How persons coming to estates of two, three, and four hundred acres can want, is to me most wonderful." How much does this wonder speak for his own scrupulous principle of always living within compass!

The residence at Barbadoes failed to have the anticipated effect on the health of Lawrence, and he determined to seek the sweet climate of Bermuda in the spring. He felt the absence from his wife, and it was arranged that George should return to Virginia, and bring her out to meet him at that island. Accordingly, on the 22nd of December, George set sail in the "Industry," bound to Virginia, where he arrived on the 1st of February, 1752, after five weeks of stormy winter seafaring.

Lawrence remained through the winter at Barbadoes; but the very mildness of the climate relaxed and enervated him. He felt the want of the bracing winter weather to which he had been accustomed. Even the invariable beauty of the climate, the perpetual summer, wearied the restless invalid. "This is the finest island of the West Indies," said he, "but I own no place can please me without a change of seasons. We soon tire of the same prospect." A consolatory truth for the inhabitants of more capricious climes.

Still some of the worst symptoms of his disorder had disappeared, and he seemed to be slowly recovering; but the nervous restlessness and desire of change, often incidental to his malady, had taken hold of him, and early in March he hastened to Bermuda. He had come too soon. The keen air of early spring brought on an aggravated return of his worst symptoms. "I have now got to my last refuge," writes he to a friend, "where I must receive my final sentence, which, at present, Dr. Forbes will not pronounce. He leaves me, however, I think, like a criminal condemned, though not without hopes of a reprieve; but this I am to obtain by meritoriously abstaining from flesh of every sort, all strong liquors, and by riding as much as I can bear. These are the only terms on which I am to hope for life."

He was now afflicted with painful indecision; and his letters perplexed his family, leaving them uncertain as to his movements, and at a loss how to act. At one time he talked of remaining a year at Bermuda, and wrote to his wife to come out with George, and rejoin him there; but the very same letter shows his irresolution and uncertainty, for he leaves her coming to the decision of herself

and friends. As to his own movements, he says, "Six weeks will determine me what to resolve on. Forbes advises the south of France, or else Barbadoes." The very next letter, written shortly afterwards in a moment of despondency, talks of the possibility of "hurrying home to his grave!"

The last was no empty foreboding. He did indeed hasten back, and just reached Mount Vernon in time to die under his own roof, surrounded by his family and friends, and attended in his last moments by that brother on whose manly affection his heart seemed to repose. His death took place on the 26th July, 1752, when but thirty-four years of age. He was a noble-spirited, pure-minded, accomplished gentleman, honoured by the public, and beloved by his friends. The paternal care ever manifested by him for his youthful brother George, and the influence his own character and conduct must have had upon him in his ductile years, should link their memories together in history, and endear the name of Lawrence Washington to every American.

Lawrence left a wife and an infant daughter to inherit his ample estates. In case his daughter should die without issue, the estate of Mount Vernon, and other lands specified in his will, were to be enjoyed by her mother during her lifetime, and at her death to be inherited by his brother George: the latter was appointed one of the executors of the will; but such was the implicit confidence reposed in his judgment and integrity, that, although he was but twenty years of age, the management of the affairs of the deceased soon devolved upon him almost entirely. It is needless to say that they were managed with consummate skill and scrupulous fidelity.

CHAPTER VII.

Council of the Ohio Tribes at Logstown—Treaty with the English—Gist's Settlement—Speeches of the Half-King and the French Commandant—French Aggressions—The Ruins of Piqua—Washington sent on a Mission to the French Commander—Jacob Van Braam, his Interpreter—Christopher Gist, his Guide—Halt at the Confluence of the Monongahela and Allegany — Projected Fort — Shingiss, the Delaware Sachem—Logstown—The Half-King—Indian Councils—Indian Diplomacy—Rumours concerning Joncaire—Indian Escorts—The Half-King, Jeskakake, and White Thunder.

The meeting of the Ohio tribes, Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingoes, to form a treaty of alliance with Virginia, took place at Logstown, at the appointed time. The chiefs of the Six Nations declined to attend. "It is not our custom," said they, proudly, "to meet to treat of affairs in the woods and weeds. If the Governor of Virginia wants to speak with us, and deliver us a present from our father (the King), we will meet him at Albany, where we expect the Governor of New York will be present."[1]

At Logstown, Colonel Fry and two other commissioners from Virginia concluded a treaty with the tribes above named, by which the latter engaged not to molest any English settlers south of the Ohio. Tanacharisson, the half-king, now advised that his brothers of Virginia should build a strong house at the fork of the Monongahela, to resist the designs of the French. Mr. Gist was accordingly instructed to lay out a town and build a fort at Shurtee's Creek, on the east side of the Ohio, a little below the site of the present city of Pittsburg. He commenced a settlement, also, in a valley just beyond Laurel Hill, not far from the Youghiogony, and prevailed on eleven families to join him. The Ohio Company, about the same time, established a trading post, well stocked with English goods, at Wills' Creek (now Cumberland River).

The Ohio tribes were greatly incensed at the aggressions of the French, who were erecting posts within their territories, and sent deputations to remonstrate, but without

[1] Letter of Colonel Johnson to Governor Clinton.—*Doc. Hist. N. Y.*, vol. ii. p. 624.

effect. The half-king, as chief of the western tribes, repaired to the French post on Lake Erie, where he made his complaint in person.

"Fathers," said he, "you are the disturbers of this land by building towns, and taking the country from us by fraud and force. We kindled a fire a long time since at Montreal, where we desired you to stay and not to come and intrude upon our land. I now advise you to return to that place, for this land is ours.

"If you had come in a peaceable manner, like our brothers the English, we should have traded with you as we do with them; but that you should come and build houses on our land, and take it by force, is what we cannot submit to. Both you and the English are white. We live in a country between you both; the land belongs to neither of you. The Great Being allotted it to us as a residence. So, fathers, I desire you, as I have desired our brothers the English, to withdraw, for I will keep you both at arm's length. Whichever most regards this request, that side will we stand by and consider friends. Our brothers the English have heard this, and I now come to tell it to you, for I am not afraid to order you off this land."

"Child," replied the French commandant, "you talk foolishly. You say this land belongs to you; there is not the black of my nail yours. It is my land, and I will have it, let who will stand up against me. I am not afraid of flies and mosquitoes, for such I consider the Indians. I tell you that down the river I will go, and build upon it. If it were blocked up, I have forces sufficient to burst it open and trample down all who oppose me. My force is as the sand upon the sea-shore; therefore, here is your wampum, I fling it at you."

Tanacharisson returned, wounded at heart, both by the language and the haughty manner of the French commandant. He saw the ruin impending over his race, but looked with hope and trust to the English as the power least disposed to wrong the red man.

French influence was successful in other quarters. Some of the Indians who had been friendly to the English showed signs of alienation; others menaced hostilities. There were reports that the French were ascending the

Mississippi from Louisiana. France, it was said, intended to connect Louisiana and Canada by a chain of military posts, and hem the English within the Allegany Mountains.

The Ohio Company complained loudly to the Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia, the Hon. Robert Dinwiddie, of the hostile conduct of the French and their Indian allies. They found in Dinwiddie a ready listener; he was a stockholder in the company.

A commissioner, Captain William Trent, was sent to expostulate with the French commander on the Ohio for his aggressions on the territory of his Britannic majesty; he bore presents also of guns, powder, shot, and clothing for the friendly Indians.

Trent was not a man of the true spirit for a mission to the frontier. He stopped short at Logstown, though the French were one hundred and fifty miles further up the river, and directed his course to Piqua, the great town of the Twightwees, where Gist and Croghan had been so well received by the Miamis, and the French flag struck on the council-house. All now was reversed. The place had been attacked by the French and Indians; the Miamis defeated with great loss; the English traders taken prisoners; the Piankesha chief, who had so proudly turned his back upon the Ottawa ambassadors, had been sacrificed by the hostile savages, and the French flag hoisted in triumph on the ruins of the town. The whole aspect of affairs was so threatening on the frontier, that Trent lost heart, and returned home without accomplishing his errand.

Governor Dinwiddie now looked round for a person more fitted to fulfil a mission which required physical strength and moral energy; a courage to cope with savages, and a sagacity to negotiate with white men. Washington was pointed out as possessed of those requisites. It is true he was not yet twenty-two years of age; but public confidence in his judgment and abilities had been manifested a second time, by renewing his appointment of adjutant-general, and assigning him the northern division. He was acquainted too with the matters in litigation, having been in the bosom councils of his deceased brother. His woodland

experience fitted him for an expedition through the wilderness; and his great discretion and self-command for a negotiation with wily commanders and fickle savages. He was accordingly chosen for the expedition.

By his letter of instructions he was directed to repair to Logstown, and hold a communication with Tanacharisson, Monacatoocha, alias Scarooyadi, the next in command, and the other sachems of the mixed tribes friendly to the English; inform them of the purport of his errand, and request an escort to the head-quarters of the French commander. To that commander he was to deliver his credentials and the letter of Governor Dinwiddie, and demand an answer in the name of his Britannic Majesty; but not to wait for it beyond a week. On receiving it, he was to request a sufficient escort to protect him on his return.

He was, moreover, to acquaint himself with the numbers and force of the French stationed on the Ohio and in its vicinity; their capability of being reinforced from Canada; the forts they had erected; where situated, how garrisoned; the object of their advancing into those parts, and how they were likely to be supported.

Washington set off from Williamsburg on the 30th of October (1753), the very day on which he received his credentials. At Fredericksburg he engaged his old "master of fence," Jacob Van Braam, to accompany him as interpreter; though it would appear, from subsequent circumstances, that the veteran swordsman was but indifferently versed either in French or English.

Having provided himself at Alexandria with necessaries for the journey, he proceeded to Winchester, then on the frontier, where he procured horses, tents, and other travelling equipments, and then pushed on by a road newly opened to Wills' Creek (Cumberland River), where he arrived on the 14th of November.

Here he met with Mr. Gist, the intrepid pioneer, who had explored the Ohio in the employ of the company, and whom he engaged to accompany and pilot him in the present expedition. He secured the services also of one John Davidson as Indian interpreter, and of four frontiersmen, two of whom were Indian traders. With this little band, and his swordsman and interpreter, Jacob Van

Braam, he set forth on the 15th of November, through a wild country, rendered almost impassable by recent storms of rain and snow.

At the mouth of Turtle Creek, on the Monongahela, he found John Frazier the Indian trader, some of whose people, as heretofore stated, had been sent off prisoners to Canada. Frazier himself had recently been ejected by the French from the Indian village of Venango, where he had a gunsmith's establishment. According to his account the French general who had commanded on this frontier was dead, and the greater part of the forces had retired into winter quarters.

As the rivers were all swollen, so that the horses had to swim them, Washington sent all the baggage down the Monongahela in a canoe under care of two of the men, who had orders to meet him at the confluence of that river with the Allegany, where their united waters form the Ohio.

"As I got down before the canoe," writes he in his journal, "I spent some time in viewing the rivers, and the land at the fork, which I think extremely well situated for a fort, as it has the absolute command of both rivers. The land at the point is twenty or twenty-five feet above the common surface of the water, and a considerable bottom of flat, well-timbered land all around it, very convenient for building. The rivers are each a quarter of a mile or more across, and run here very nearly at right angles; Allegany bearing north-east, and Monongahela south-east. The former of these two is a very rapid and swift-running water, the other deep and still, without any perceptible fall." The Ohio company had intended to build a fort about two miles from this place, on the south-east side of the river; but Washington gave the fork the decided preference. French engineers of experience proved the accuracy of his military eye, by subsequently choosing it for the site of Fort Duquesne, noted in frontier history.

In this neighbourhood lived Shingiss, the king or chief sachem of the Delawares. Washington visited him at his village, to invite him to the council at Logstown. He was one of the greatest warriors of his tribe, and subsequently took up the hatchet at various times against the English,

though now he seemed favourably disposed, and readily accepted the invitation.

They arrived at Logstown after sunset on the 24th of November. The half-king was absent at his hunting-lodge on Beaver Creek, about fifteen miles distant; but Washington had runners sent out to invite him and all the other chiefs to a grand talk on the following day.

In the morning four French deserters came into the village. They had deserted from a company of one hundred men, sent up from New Orleans with eight canoes laden with provisions. Washington drew from them an account of the French force at New Orleans, and of the forts along the Mississippi, and at the mouth of the Wabash, by which they kept up a communication with the lakes; all which he carefully noted down. The deserters were on their way to Philadelphia, conducted by a Pennsylvania trader.

About three o'clock the half-king arrived. Washington had a private conversation with him in his tent, through Davidson, the interpreter. He found him intelligent, patriotic, and proudly tenacious of his territorial rights. We have already cited from Washington's papers the account given by this chief, in this conversation, of his interview with the late French commander. He stated, moreover, that the French had built two forts, differing in size, but on the same model, a plan of which he gave, of his own drawing. The largest was on Lake Erie, the other on French Creek, fifteen miles apart, with a waggon road between them. The nearest and levellest way to them was now impassable, lying through large and miry savannas; they would have, therefore, to go by Venango, and it would take five or six sleeps (or days) of good travelling to reach the nearest fort.

On the following morning, at nine o'clock, the chiefs assembled at the council-house, where Washington, according to his instructions, informed them that he was sent by their brother, the Governor of Virginia, to deliver to the French commandant a letter of great importance, both to their brothers the English and to themselves; and that he was to ask their advice and assistance, and some of their young men to accompany and provide for him on the

way, and be his safeguard against the "French Indians," who had taken up the hatchet. He concluded by presenting the indispensable document in Indian diplomacy, a string of wampum.

The chiefs, according to etiquette, sat for some moments silent after he had concluded, as if ruminating on what had been said, or to give him time for further remark.

The half-king then rose and spoke in behalf of the tribes, assuring him that they considered the English and themselves brothers, and one people; and that they intended to return the French the "speech-belts," or wampums, which the latter had sent them. This, in Indian diplomacy, is a renunciation of all friendly relations. An escort would be furnished to Washington, composed of Mingoes, Shannoahs, and Delawares, in token of the love and loyalty of those several tribes; but three days would be required to prepare for the journey.

Washington remonstrated against such delay; but was informed, that an affair of such moment, where three speech-belts were to be given up, was not to be entered into without due consideration. Besides, the young men who were to form the escort were absent hunting, and the half-king could not suffer the party to go without sufficient protection. His own French speech-belt, also, was at his hunting-lodge, where he must go in quest of it. Moreover, the Shannoah chiefs were yet absent and must be waited for. In short, Washington had his first lesson in Indian diplomacy, which for punctilio, ceremonial, and secret manœuvring, is equal at least to that of civilized life. He soon found that to urge a more speedy departure would be offensive to Indian dignity and decorum, so he was fain to await the gathering together of the different chiefs with their speech-belts.

In fact, there was some reason for all this caution. Tidings had reached the sachems that Captain Joncaire had called a meeting, at Venango, of the Mingoes, Delawares, and other tribes, and made them a speech, informing them that the French, for the present, had gone into winter quarters, but intended to descend the river in great force, and fight the English in the spring. He had advised them, therefore, to stand aloof, for should they interfere,

the French and English would join, cut them all off, and divide their land between them.

With these rumours preying on their minds, the half-king and three other chiefs waited on Washington in his tent in the evening, and after representing that they had complied with all the requisitions of the Governor of Virginia, endeavoured to draw from the youthful ambassador the true purport of his mission to the French commandant. Washington had anticipated an inquiry of the kind, knowing how natural it was that these poor people should regard, with anxiety and distrust, every movement of two formidable powers thus pressing upon them from opposite sides: he managed, however, to answer them in such manner as to allay their solicitude without transcending the bounds of diplomatic secrecy.

After a day or two more of delay and further consultations in the council-house, the chiefs determined that but three of their number should accompany the mission, as a greater number might awaken the suspicions of the French. Accordingly, on the 30th of November, Washington set out for the French post, having his usual party augmented by an Indian hunter, and being accompanied by the half-king, an old Shannoah sachem named Jeskakake, and another chief, sometimes called Belt of Wampum, from being the keeper of the speech-belts, but generally bearing the sounding appellation of White Thunder.

CHAPTER VIII.

Arrival at Venango—Captain Joncaire—Frontier Revelry—Discussions over the Bottle—The old Diplomatist and the young—The Half-King, Jeskakake, and White Thunder staggered—The Speech-belt—Departure—La Force, the wily Commissary—Fort at French Creek—The Chevalier Legardeur de St. Pierre, Knight of St. Louis—Captain Reparti—Transactions at the Fort—Attempts to seduce the Sachems—Mischief brewing on the Frontier—Difficulties and Delays in Parting—Descent of French Creek—Arrival at Venango.

Although the distance to Venango, by the route taken, was not above seventy miles, yet such was the inclemency of the weather and the difficulty of travelling, that Washington and his party did not arrive there until the 4th of

November. The French colours were flying at a house whence John Frazier, the English trader, had been driven. Washington repaired thither, and inquired of three French officers whom he saw there where the commandant resided. One of them promptly replied that he "had the command of the Ohio." It was, in fact, the redoubtable Captain Joncaire, the veteran intriguer of the frontier. On being apprised, however, of the nature of Washington's errand, he informed him that there was a general officer at the next fort, where he advised him to apply for an answer to the letter of which he was the bearer.

In the mean time, he invited Washington and his party to a supper at head-quarters. It proved a jovial one, for Joncaire appears to have been somewhat of a boon companion, and there is always ready though rough hospitality in the wilderness. It is true, Washington, for so young a man, may not have had the most convivial air, but there may have been a moist look of promise in the old soldier Van Braam.

Joncaire and his brother officers pushed the bottle briskly. "The wine," says Washington, "as they dosed themselves pretty plentifully with it, soon banished the restraint which at first appeared in their conversation, and gave a license to their tongues to reveal their sentiments more freely. They told me that it was their absolute design to take possession of the Ohio, and by G— they would do it; for that although they were sensible the English could raise two men for their one, yet they knew their motions were too slow and dilatory to prevent any undertaking. They pretend to have an undoubted right to the river from a discovery made by one La Salle sixty years ago, and the rise of this expedition is to prevent our settling on the river or the waters of it, as they heard of some families moving out in order thereto."

Washington retained his sobriety and his composure throughoutall the rhodomontade and bacchanalian outbreak of the mercurial Frenchmen; leaving the task of pledging them to his master of fence, Van Braam, who was not a man to flinch from potations. He took careful note, however, of all their revelations, and collected a variety of information concerning the French forces; how and where

they were distributed; the situations and distances of their forts, and their means and mode of obtaining supplies. If the veteran diplomatist of the wilderness had intended this revel for a snare, he was completely foiled by his youthful competitor.

On the following day there was no travelling on account of excessive rain. Joncaire, in the mean time, having discovered that the half-king was with the mission, expressed his surprise that he had not accompanied it to his quarters on the preceding day. Washington, in truth, had feared to trust the sachem within the reach of the politic Frenchman. Nothing would do now but Joncaire must have the sachems at head-quarters. Here his diplomacy was triumphant. He received them with open arms. He was enraptured to see them. His Indian brothers! How could they be so near without coming to visit him? He made them presents; but, above all, plied them so potently with liquor, that the poor half-king, Jeskakake, and White Thunder forgot all about their wrongs, their speeches, their speech-belts, and all the business they had come upon; paid no heed to the repeated cautions of their English friends, and were soon in a complete state of frantic extravagance or drunken oblivion.

The next day the half-king made his appearance at Washington's tent, perfectly sober and very much crest-fallen. He declared, however, that he still intended to make his speech to the French, and offered to rehearse it on the spot; but Washington advised him not to waste his ammunition on inferior game like Joncaire and his comrades, but to reserve it for the commandant. The sachem was not to be persuaded. Here, he said, was the place of the council fire, where they were accustomed to transact their business with the French; and as to Joncaire, he had all the management of French affairs with the Indians.

Washington was fain to attend the council fire and listen to the speech. It was much the same in purport as that which he had made to the French general, and he ended by offering to return the French speech-belt; but this Joncaire refused to receive, telling him to carry it to the commander at the fort.

All that day and the next was the party kept at Venango

by the stratagems of Joncaire and his emissaries to detain and seduce the sachems. It was not until 12 o'clock on the 7th of December, that Washington was able to extricate them out of their clutches and commence his journey.

A French commissary by the name of La Force, and three soldiers, set off in company with him. La Force went as if on ordinary business, but he proved one of the most active, daring, and mischief-making of those anomalous agents employed by the French among the Indian tribes. It is probable that he was at the bottom of many of the perplexities experienced by Washington at Venango, and now travelled with him for the prosecution of his wiles. He will be found, hereafter, acting a more prominent part, and ultimately reaping the fruit of his evil doings.

After four days of weary travel through snow and rain, and mire and swamp, the party reached the fort. It was situated on a kind of island on the west fork of French Creek, about fifteen miles south of Lake Erie, and consisted of four houses, forming a hollow square, defended by bastions made of palisades twelve feet high, picketed, and pierced for cannon and small arms. Within the bastions were a guard-house, chapel, and other buildings, and outside were stables, a smith's forge, and log-houses covered with bark, for soldiers.

On the death of the late general, the fort had remained in charge of one Captain Reparti until within a week past, when the Chevalier Legardeur de St. Pierre had arrived, and taken command.

The reception of Washington at the fort was very different from the unceremonious one experienced at the outpost of Joncaire and his convivial messmates. When he presented himself at the gate, accompanied by his interpreter, Van Braam, he was met by the officer second in command and conducted in due military form to his superior; an ancient and silver-haired chevalier of the military order of St. Louis, courteous but ceremonious; mingling the polish of the French gentleman of the old school with the precision of the soldier.

Having announced his errand through his interpreter, Van Braam, Washington offered his credentials and the

letter of Governor Dinwiddie, and was disposed to proceed at once to business with the prompt frankness of a young man unhackneyed in diplomacy. The chevalier, however, politely requested him to retain the documents in his possession until his predecessor, Captain Reparti, should arrive, who was hourly expected from the next post.

At two o'clock the captain arrived. The letter and its accompanying documents were then offered again, and received in due form, and the chevalier and his officers retired with them into a private apartment, where the captain, who understood a little English, officiated as translator. The translation being finished, Washington was requested to walk in and bring his translator, Van Braam, with him, to peruse and correct it, which he did.

In this letter, Dinwiddie complained of the intrusion of French forces into the Ohio country, erecting forts and making settlements in the western parts of the colony of Virginia, so notoriously known to be the property of the crown of Great Britain. He inquired by whose authority and instructions the French Commander-general had marched this force from Canada, and made this invasion; intimating that his own action would be regulated by the answer he should receive, and the tenor of the commission with which he was honoured. At the same time he required of the commandant his peaceable departure, and that he would forbear to prosecute a purpose "so interruptive of the harmony and good understanding which his majesty was desirous to continue and cultivate with the most catholic king."

The latter part of the letter related to the youthful envoy. "I persuade myself you will receive and entertain Major Washington with the candour and politeness natural to your nation, and it will give me the greatest satisfaction if you can return him with an answer suitable to my wishes for a long and lasting peace between us."

The two following days were consumed in councils of the chevalier and his officers over the letter, and the necessary reply. Washington occupied himself in the mean time in observing and taking notes of the plan, dimensions, and strength of the fort, and of everything about it. He gave orders to his people, also, to take an exact account of

the canoes in readiness, and others in the process of construction, for the conveyance of troops down the river in the ensuing spring.

As the weather continued stormy, with much snow, and the horses were daily losing strength, he sent them down, unladen, to Venango, to await his return by water. In the mean time he discovered that busy intrigues were going on to induce the half-king and the other sachems to abandon him, and renounce all friendship with the English. Upon learning this, he urged the chiefs to deliver up their 'speech-belts' immediately, as they had promised, thereby shaking off all dependence upon the French. They accordingly pressed for an audience that very evening. A private one was at length granted them by the commander in presence of one or two of his officers. The half-king reported the result of it to Washington. The venerable but astute chevalier cautiously evaded the acceptance of the proffered wampum; made many professions of love and friendship, and said he wished to live in peace and trade amicably with the tribes of the Ohio, in proof of which he would send down some goods immediately for them to Logstown.

As Washington understood privately that an officer was to accompany the man employed to convey these goods, he suspected that the real design was to arrest and bring off all straggling English traders they might meet with. What strengthened this opinion was a frank avowal which had been made to him by the chevalier, that he had orders to capture every British subject who should attempt to trade upon the Ohio or its waters.

Captain Reparti, also, in reply to his inquiry as to what had been done with two Pennsylvania traders who had been taken with all their goods, informed him that they had been sent to Canada, but had since returned home. He had stated, furthermore, that during the time he held command a white boy had been carried captive past the fort by a party of Indians, who had with them also two or three white men's scalps.

All these circumstances showed him the mischief that was brewing in these parts, and the treachery and violence that pervaded the frontier, and made him the more soli-

citous to accomplish his mission successfully, and conduct his little band in safety out of a wily neighbourhood.

On the evening of the 14th, the Chevalier de St. Pierre delivered to Washington his sealed reply to the letter of Governor Dinwiddie. The purport of previous conversations with the chevalier, and the whole complexion of affairs on the frontier, left no doubt of the nature of that reply.

The business of his mission being accomplished, Washington prepared on the 15th to return by water to Venango, but a secret influence was at work which retarded every movement.

"The commandant," writes he, "ordered a plentiful store of liquor and provisions to be put on board our canoes, and appeared to be extremely complaisant, though he was exerting every artifice which he could invent to set our Indians at variance with us, to prevent their going until after our departure; presents, rewards, and everything which could be suggested by him or his officers. I cannot say that ever in my life I suffered so much anxiety as I did in this affair. I saw that every stratagem which the most fruitful brain could invent was practised to win the half-king to their interests, and that leaving him there was giving them the opportunity they aimed at. I went to the half-king, and pressed him in the strongest terms to go; he told me that the commandant would not discharge him until the morning. I then went to the commandant and desired him to do their business, and complained to him of ill treatment; for keeping them, as they were a part of my company, was detaining me. This he promised not to do, but to forward my journey as much as he could. He protested he did not keep them, but was ignorant of the cause of their stay, though I soon found it out. He had promised them a present of guns if they would wait until the morning. As I was very much pressed by the Indians to wait this day for them, I consented, on the promise that nothing should hinder them in the morning."

The next morning (16th) the French, in fulfilment of their promise, had to give the present of guns. They then endeavoured to detain the sachems with liquor, which at any other time might have prevailed; but Washington re-

minded the half-king that his royal word was pledged to depart, and urged it upon him so closely that he exerted unwonted resolution and self-denial, turned his back upon the liquor and embarked.

It was rough and laborious navigation. French Creek was swollen and turbulent, and full of floating ice. The frail canoes were several times in danger of being staved to pieces against rocks. Often the voyagers had to leap out and remain in the water half an hour at a time, drawing the canoes over shoals, and at one place to carry them a quarter of a mile across a neck of land, the river being completely dammed by ice. It was not until the 22d that they reached Venango.

Here Washington was obliged, most unwillingly, to part company with the sachems. White Thunder had hurt himself and was ill and unable to walk, and the others determined to remain at Venango for a day or two, and convey him down the river in a canoe. There was danger that the smooth-tongued and convivial Joncaire would avail himself of the interval to ply the poor monarchs of the woods with flattery and liquor. Washington endeavoured to put the worthy half-king on his guard, knowing that he had once before shown himself but little proof against the seductions of the bottle. The sachem, however, desired him not to be concerned: he knew the French too well for anything to engage him in their favour; nothing should shake his faith to his English brothers; and it will be found that in these assurances he was sincere.

CHAPTER IX.

Return from Venango—A Tramp on Foot—Murdering Town—The Indian Guide—Treachery—An Anxious Night—Perils on the Allegany River—Queen Aliquippa—The old Watch-coat—Return across the Blue Ridge.

On the 25th of December, Washington and his little party set out by land from Venango on their route homeward. They had a long winter's journey before them, through a wilderness beset with dangers and difficulties. The pack-horses, laden with tents, baggage, and provisions, were

completely jaded; it was feared they would give out. Washington dismounted, gave up his saddle-horse to aid in transporting the baggage, and requested his companions to do the same. None but the drivers remained in the saddle. He now equipped himself in an Indian hunting-dress, and with Van Braam, Gist, and John Davidson, the Indian interpreter, proceeded on foot.

The cold increased. There was deep snow that froze as it fell. The horses grew less and less capable of travelling. For three days they toiled on slowly and wearily. Washington was impatient to accomplish his journey, and make his report to the governor; he determined, therefore, to hasten some distance in advance of the party, and then strike for the fork of the Ohio by the nearest course directly through the woods. He accordingly put the cavalcade under the command of Van Braam, and furnished him with money for expenses; then disencumbering himself of all superfluous clothing, buckling himself up in a watch-coat, strapping his pack on his shoulders, containing his papers and provisions, and taking gun in hand, he left the horses to flounder on, and struck manfully ahead, accompanied only by Mr. Gist, who had equipped himself in like manner.

At night they lit a fire, and "camped" by it in the woods. At two o'clock in the morning they were again on foot, and pressed forward until they struck the south-east fork of Beaver Creek, at a place bearing the sinister name of Murdering Town, probably the scene of some Indian massacre.

Here Washington, in planning his route, had intended to leave the regular path, and strike through the woods for Shannopins Town, two or three miles above the fork of the Ohio, where he hoped to be able to cross the Allegany River on the ice.

At Murdering Town he found a party of Indians, who appeared to have known of his coming, and to have been waiting for him. One of them accosted Mr. Gist, and expressed great joy at seeing him. The wary woodsman regarded him narrowly, and thought he had seen him at Joncaire's. If so, he and his comrades were in the French interest, and their lying in wait boded no good. The

Indian was very curious in his inquiries as to when they had left Venango; how they came to be travelling on foot; where they had left their horses, and when it was probable the latter would reach this place. All these questions increased the distrust of Gist, and rendered him extremely cautious in reply.

The route hence to Shannopins Town lay through a trackless wild, of which the travellers knew nothing; after some consultation, therefore, it was deemed expedient to engage one of the Indians as a guide. He entered upon his duties with alacrity, took Washington's pack upon his back, and led the way by what he said was the most direct course. After travelling briskly for eight or ten miles Washington became fatigued, and his feet were chafed; he thought, too, they were taking a direction too much to the north-east; he came to a halt, therefore, and determined to light a fire, make a shelter of the bark and branches of trees, and encamp there for the night. The Indian demurred; he offered, as Washington was fatigued, to carry his gun, but the latter was too wary to part with his weapon. The Indian now grew churlish. There were Ottawa Indians in the woods, he said, who might be attracted by their fire, and surprise and scalp them; he urged, therefore, that they should continue on: he would take them to his cabin, where they would be safe.

Mr. Gist's suspicions increased, but he said nothing. Washington's also were awakened. They proceeded some distance further: the guide paused and listened. He had heard, he said, the report of a gun toward the north; it must be from his cabin; he accordingly turned his steps in that direction.

Washington began to apprehend an ambuscade of savages. He knew the hostility of many of them to the English, and what a desirable trophy was the scalp of a white man. The Indian still kept on toward the north; he pretended to hear two whoops—they were from his cabin—it could not be far off.

They went on two miles further, when Washington signified his determination to encamp at the first water they should find. The guide said nothing, but kept doggedly on. After a little while they arrived at an opening in the

woods, and, emerging from the deep shadows in which they had been travelling, found themselves in a clear meadow, rendered still more light by the glare of the snow upon the ground. Scarcely had they emerged, when the Indian, who was about fifteen paces ahead, suddenly turned, levelled his gun, and fired. Washington was startled for an instant, but, feeling that he was not wounded, demanded quickly of Mr. Gist if he was shot. The latter answered in the negative. The Indian, in the mean time, had run forward, and screened himself behind a large white oak, where he was reloading his gun. They overtook and seized him. Gist would have put him to death on the spot, but Washington humanely prevented him. They permitted him to finish the loading of his gun; but, after he had put in the ball, took the weapon from him, and let him see that he was under guard.

Arriving at a small stream, they ordered the Indian to make a fire, and took turns to watch over the guns. While he was thus occupied, Gist, a veteran woodsman, and accustomed to hold the life of an Indian rather cheap, was somewhat incommoded by the scruples of his youthful commander, which might enable the savage to carry out some scheme of treachery. He observed to Washington that, since he would not suffer the Indian to be killed, they must manage to get him out of the way, and then decamp with all speed, and travel all night, to leave this perfidious neighbourhood behind them. But first it was necessary to blind the guide as to their intentions. He accordingly addressed him in a friendly tone, and, adverting to the late circumstance, pretended to suppose that he had lost his way, and fired his gun merely as a signal. The Indian, whether deceived or not, readily chimed in with the explanation. He said he now knew the way to his cabin, which was at no great distance. "Well, then," replied Gist, "you can go home, and, as we are tired, we will remain here for the night, and follow your track at daylight. In the mean time here is a cake of bread for you, and you must give us some meat in the morning."

Whatever might have been the original designs of the savage, he was evidently glad to get off. Gist followed him cautiously for a distance, and listened until the sound

of his footsteps died away. Returning then to Washington, they proceeded about half a mile, made another fire, set their compass and fixed their course by the light of it, then, leaving it burning, pushed forward, and travelled as fast as possible all night, so as to gain a fair start should any one pursue them at daylight. Continuing on the next day they never relaxed their speed until nightfall, when they arrived on the banks of the Allegany River, about two miles above Shannopins Town.

Washington had expected to find the river frozen completely over; it was so only for about fifty yards from either shore, while great quantities of broken ice were driving down the main channel. Trusting that he had out-travelled pursuit, he encamped on the border of the river: still it was an anxious night, and he was up at daybreak to devise some means of reaching the opposite bank. No other mode presented itself than by a raft, and to construct this they had but one poor hatchet. With this they set resolutely to work and laboured all day, but the sun went down before their raft was finished. They launched it, however, and, getting on board, endeavoured to propel it across with setting poles. Before they were half way over the raft became jammed between cakes of ice, and they were in imminent peril. Washington planted his pole on the bottom of the stream, and leaned against it with all his might, to stay the raft until the ice should pass by. The rapid current forced the ice against the pole with such violence that he was jerked into the water, where it was at least ten feet deep, and he only saved himself from being swept away and drowned by catching hold of one of the raft logs.

It was now impossible, with all their exertions, to get to either shore; abandoning the raft, therefore, they got upon an island near which they were drifting. Here they passed the night, exposed to intense cold, by which the hands and feet of Mr. Gist were frozen. In the morning they found the drift ice wedged so closely together, that they succeeded in getting from the island to the opposite side of the river, and before night were in comfortable quarters at the house of Frazier, the Indian trader, at the mouth of Turtle Creek, on the Monongahela.

Here they learned from a war party of Indians that a band of Ottawas, a tribe in the interest of the French, had massacred a whole family of whites on the banks of the great Kanawha River.

At Frazier's they were detained two or three days endeavouring to procure horses. In this interval Washington had again occasion to exercise Indian diplomacy. About three miles distant, at the mouth of the Youhiogany River, dwelt a female sachem, Queen Aliquippa, as the English called her, whose sovereign dignity had been aggrieved, that the party on their way to the Ohio had passed near her royal wigwam without paying their respects to her.

Aware of the importance, at this critical juncture, of securing the friendship of the Indians, Washington availed himself of the interruption of his journey, to pay a visit of ceremony to this native princess. Whatever anger she may have felt at past neglect, it was readily appeased by a present of his old watch-coat; and her good graces were completely secured by a bottle of rum, which, he intimates, appeared to be peculiarly acceptable to her majesty.

Leaving Frazier's on the 1st of January, they arrived on the 2nd at the residence of Mr. Gist, on the Monongahela. Here they separated, and Washington, having purchased a horse, continued his homeward course, passing horses laden with materials and stores for the fort at the fork of the Ohio, and families going out to settle there.

Having crossed the Blue Ridge and stopped one day at Belvoir to rest, he reached Williamsburg on the 16th of January, where he delivered to Governor Dinwiddie the letter of the French commandant, and made him a full report of the events of his mission.

We have been minute in our account of this expedition as it was an early test and development of the various talents and characteristics of Washington.

The prudence, sagacity, resolution, firmness, and self-devotion manifested by him throughout; his admirable tact and self-possession in treating with fickle savages and crafty white men; the soldier's eye with which he had noticed the commanding and defensible points of the country, and everything that would bear upon military

operations; and the hardihood with which he had acquitted himself during a wintry tramp through the wilderness through constant storms of rain and snow; often sleeping on the ground, without a tent, in the open air, and in danger from treacherous foes—all pointed him out, not merely to the governor, but to the public at large, as one eminently fitted, notwithstanding his youth, for important trusts involving civil as well as military duties. It is an expedition that may be considered the foundation of his fortunes. From that moment he was the rising hope of Virginia.

CHAPTER X.

Reply of the Chevalier de St. Pierre—Trent's Mission to the Frontier—Washington recruits Troops—Dinwiddie and the House of Burgesses—Independent Conduct of the Virginians—Expedients to gain Recruits—Jacob Van Braam in Service—Toilful March to Wills' Creek—Contrecœur at the Fork of the Ohio—Trent's refractory Troops.

The reply of the Chevalier de St. Pierre was such as might have been expected from that courteous but wary commander. He should transmit, he said, the letter of Governor Dinwiddie to his general, the Marquis du Quesne, "to whom," observed he, "it better belongs than to me to set forth the evidence and reality of the rights of the king, my master, upon the lands situate along the River Ohio, and to contest the pretensions of the King of Great Britain thereto. His answer shall be law to me. * * * * * As to the summons you send me to retire, I do not think myself obliged to obey it. Whatever may be your instructions, I am here by virtue of the orders of my general; and I entreat you, sir, not to doubt one moment but that I am determined to conform myself to them with all the exactness and resolution which can be expected from the best officer. * * * * *

"I made it my particular care," adds he, "to receive Mr. Washington with a distinction suitable to your dignity, as well as his own quality and great merit. I flatter myself that he will do me this justice before you, sir, and

that he will signify to you, in the manner I do myself, the profound respect with which I am, sir, &c."[1]

This soldier like and punctilious letter of the chevalier was considered evasive, and only intended to gain time. The information given by Washington of what he had observed on the frontier, convinced Governor Dinwiddie and his council that the French were preparing to descend the Ohio in the spring, and take military possession of the country. Washington's journal was printed, and widely promulgated throughout the colonies and England, and awakened the nation to a sense of the impending danger, and the necessity of prompt measures to anticipate the French movements.

Captain Trent was despatched to the frontier, commissioned to raise a company of one hundred men, march with all speed to the fork of the Ohio, and finish as soon as possible the fort commenced there by the Ohio Company. He was enjoined to act only on the defensive, but to capture or destroy whoever should oppose the construction of the works, or disturb the settlements. The choice of Captain Trent for this service, notwithstanding his late inefficient expedition, was probably owing to his being brother-in-law to George Croghan, who had grown to be quite a personage of consequence on the frontier, where he had an establishment or trading-house, and was supposed to have great influence among the western tribes, so as to be able at any time to persuade many of them to take up the hatchet.

Washington was empowered to raise a company of like force at Alexandria; to procure and forward munitions and supplies for the projected fort at the Fork, and ultimately to have command of both companies. When on the frontier, he was to take council of George Croghan and Andrew Montour, the interpreter, in all matters relating to the Indians, they being esteemed perfect oracles in that department.

Governor Dinwiddie in the mean time called upon the governors of the other provinces to make common cause against the foe; he endeavoured, also, to effect alliances with the Indian tribes of the south, the Catawbas and

[1] London Mag., June, 1754.

Cherokees, by way of counterbalancing the Chippewas and Ottawas, who were devoted to the French.

The colonies, however, felt as yet too much like isolated territories; the spirit of union was wanting. Some pleaded a want of military funds; some questioned the justice of the cause; some declined taking any hostile step that might involve them in a war, unless they should have direct orders from the crown.

Dinwiddie convened the House of Burgesses to devise measures for the public security. Here his high idea of prerogative and of gubernatorial dignity met with a grievous countercheck from the dawning spirit of independence. High as were the powers vested in the colonial government of Virginia, of which, though but lieutenant-governor, he had the actual control, they were counterbalanced by the power inherent in the people, growing out of their situation and circumstances, and acting through their representatives.

There was no turbulent factious opposition to government in Virginia; no "fierce democracy;" the rank growth of crowded cities, and a fermenting populace; but there was the independence of men, living apart in patriarchal style on their own rural domains; surrounded by their families, dependants, and slaves, among whom their will was law—and there was the individuality in character and action of men prone to nurture peculiar notions and habits of thinking, in the thoughtful solitariness of country life.

When Dinwiddie propounded his scheme of operations on the Ohio, some of the burgesses had the hardihood to doubt the claims of the king to the disputed territory; a doubt which the governor reprobated as savoring strongly of a most disloyal French spirit; he fired, as he says, at the thought "that an English legislature should presume to doubt the right of his majesty to the interior parts of this continent, the back part of his dominions!"

Others demurred to any grant of means for military purposes which might be construed into an act of hostility. To meet this scruple it was suggested that the grant might be made for the purpose of encouraging and protecting all settlers on the waters of the Mississippi. And under this specious plea ten thousand pounds were grudgingly voted;

but even this moderate sum was not put at the absolute disposition of the governor. A committee was appointed with whom he was to confer as to its appropriation.

This precaution Dinwiddie considered an insulting invasion of the right he possessed as governor to control the purse as well as the sword; and he complained bitterly of the assembly, as deeply tinctured with a republican way of thinking, and disposed to encroach on the prerogative of the crown, "which he feared would render them more and more difficult to be *brought to order*."

Ways and means being provided, Governor Dinwiddie augmented the number of troops to be enlisted to three hundred, divided into six companies. The command of the whole, as before, was offered to Washington, but he shrank from it, as a charge too great for his youth and inexperience. It was given, therefore, to Colonel Joshua Fry, an English gentleman of worth and education, and Washington was made second in command, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

The recruiting, at first, went on slowly. Those who offered to enlist, says Washington, were for the most part loose idle persons without house or home, some without shoes or stockings, some shirtless, and many without coat or waistcoat.

He was young in the recruiting service, or he would have known that such is generally the stuff of which armies are made. In this country especially it has always been difficult to enlist the active yeomanry by holding out merely the pay of a soldier. The means of subsistence are too easily obtained by the industrious, for them to give up home and personal independence for a mere daily support. Some may be tempted by a love of adventure; but in general, they require some prospect of ultimate advantage that may "better their condition."

Governor Dinwiddie became sensible of this, and resorted to an expedient rising out of the natural resources of the country, which has since been frequently adopted, and always with efficacy. He proclaimed a bounty of two hundred thousand acres of land on the Ohio River, to be divided among the officers and soldiers who should engage in this expedition; one thousand to be laid off contiguous

to the fort at the Fork, for the use of the garrison. This was a tempting bait to the sons of farmers, who readily enlisted in the hope of having, at the end of a short campaign, a snug farm of their own in this land of promise.

It was a more difficult matter to get officers than soldiers. Very few of those appointed made their appearance; one of the captains had been promoted; two declined; Washington found himself left, almost alone, to manage a number of self-willed, undisciplined recruits. Happily he had with him, in the rank of lieutenant, that soldier of fortune, Jacob Van Braam, his old "master of fence," and travelling interpreter.

In his emergency he forthwith nominated him captain, and wrote to the governor to confirm the appointment, representing him as the oldest lieutenant, and an experienced officer.

On the 2nd of April Washington set off from Alexandria for the new fort, at the fork of the Ohio. He had but two companies with him, amounting to about one hundred and fifty men; the remainder of the regiment was to follow under Colonel Fry with the artillery, which was to be conveyed up the Potomac. While on the march he was joined by a detachment under Captain Adam Stephens, an officer destined to serve with him at distant periods of his military career.

At Winchester he found it impossible to obtain conveyances by gentle means, and was obliged reluctantly to avail himself of the militia law of Virginia, and impress horses and waggons for service; giving the owners orders on government for their appraised value. Even then, out of a great number impressed, he obtained but ten, after waiting a week; these, too, were grudgingly furnished by the farmers with their worst horses, so that in steep and difficult passes they were incompetent to the draught, and the soldiers had continually to put their shoulders to the wheels.

Thus slenderly fitted out, Washington and his little force made their way toilfully across the mountains, having to prepare the roads as they went for the transportation of the cannon, which were to follow on with the other division under Colonel Fry. They cheered themselves with the

thoughts that this hard work would cease when they should arrive at the company's trading-post and store-house at Wills' Creek, where Captain Trent was to have packhorses in readiness, with which they might make the rest of the way by light stages. Before arriving there, they were startled by a rumour that Trent and all his men had been captured by the French. With regard to Trent, the news soon proved to be false, for they found him at Wills' Creek on the 20th of April. With regard to his men there was still an uncertainty. He had recently left them at the fork of the Ohio, busily at work on the fort, under the command of his lieutenant, Frazier, late Indian trader and gunsmith, but now a provincial officer. If the men had been captured, it must have been since the captain's departure. Washington was eager to press forward and ascertain the truth, but it was impossible. Trent, inefficient as usual, had failed to provide packhorses. It was necessary to send to Winchester, forty miles distant, for baggage waggons, and await their arrival. All uncertainty as to the fate of the men, however, was brought to a close by their arrival, on the 25th, conducted by an ensign, and bringing with them their working implements. The French might well boast that they had again been too quick for the English. Captain Contrecœur, an alert officer, had embarked about a thousand men with field-pieces, in a fleet of sixty batteaux and three hundred canoes, dropped down the river from Venango, and suddenly made his appearance before the fort, on which the men were working, and which was not half completed. Landing, drawing up his men, and planting his artillery, he summoned the fort to surrender, allowing one hour for a written reply.

What was to be done? the whole garrison did not exceed fifty men. Captain Trent was absent at Wills' Creek; Frazier, his lieutenant, was at his own residence at Turtle Creek, ten miles distant. There was no officer to reply but a young ensign of the name of Ward. In his perplexity he turned for counsel to Tanacharisson, the half-king, who was present in the fort. The chief advised the ensign to plead insufficiency of rank and powers, and crave delay until the arrival of his superior officer. The ensign repaired to the French camp to offer this excuse in person,

and was accompanied by the half-king. They were courteously received, but Contrecœur was inflexible. There must be instant surrender, or he would take forcible possession. All that the ensign could obtain was permission to depart with his men, taking with them their working tools. The capitulation ended. Contrecœur, with true French gaiety, invited the ensign to sup with him; treated him with the utmost politeness, and wished him a pleasant journey, as he set off the next morning with his men laden with their working tools,

Such was the ensign's story. He was accompanied by two Indian warriors, sent by the half-king to ascertain where the detachment was, what was its strength, and when it might be expected at the Ohio. They bore a speech from that sachem to Washington, and another, with a belt of wampum, for the Governor of Virginia. In these he plighted his stedfast faith to the English, and claimed assistance from his brothers of Virginia and Pennsylvania.

One of these warriors Washington forwarded on with the speech and wampum to Governor Dinwiddie. The other he prevailed on to return to the half-king, bearing a speech from him, addressed to the "Sachems, warriors of the Six United Nations, Shannoahs and Delawares, our friends and brethren." In this he informed them that he was on the advance with a part of the army, to clear the road for a greater force coming with guns, ammunition, and provisions; and he invited the half-king and another sachem to meet him on the road as soon as possible to hold a council.

In fact, his situation was arduous in the extreme. Regarding the conduct of the French in the recent occurrence an overt act of war, he found himself thrown with a handful of raw recruits far on a hostile frontier in the midst of a wilderness, with an enemy at hand greatly superior in number and discipline; provided with artillery, and all the munitions of war, and within reach of constant supplies and reinforcements. Besides the French that had come from Venango, he had received credible accounts of another party ascending the Ohio; and of six hundred Chippewas and Ottawas marching down Scioto Creek to join the

hostile camp. Still, notwithstanding the accumulating danger, it would not do to fall back, nor show signs of apprehension. His Indian allies in such case might desert him. The soldiery, too, might grow restless and dissatisfied. He was already annoyed by Captain Trent's men, who, having enlisted as volunteers, considered themselves exempt from the rigour of martial law; and by their example of loose and refractory conduct, threatened to destroy the subordination of his own troops.

In this dilemma he called a council of war, in which it was determined to proceed to the Ohio Company's storehouses, at the mouth of Redstone Creek; fortify themselves there, and wait for reinforcements. Here they might keep up a vigilant watch upon the enemy, and get notice of any hostile movement in time for defence, or retreat; and should they be reinforced sufficiently to enable them to attack the fort, they could easily drop down the river with their artillery.

With these alternatives in view, Washington detached sixty men in advance to make a road; and at the same time wrote to Governor Dinwiddie for mortars and grenadoes, and cannon of heavy metal.

Aware that the Assembly of Pennsylvania was in session, and that the Maryland Assembly would also meet in the course of a few days, he wrote directly to the governors of those provinces, acquainting them with the hostile acts of the French, and with his perilous situation; and endeavouring to rouse them to co-operation in the common cause. We will here note in advance that his letter was laid before the Legislature of Pennsylvania, and a bill was about to be passed making appropriations for the service of the king; but it fell through, in consequence of a disagreement between the Assembly and the governor as to the mode in which the money should be raised; and so no assistance was furnished to Washington from that quarter. The youthful commander had here a foretaste, in these his incipient campaigns, of the perils and perplexities which awaited him from enemies in the field, and lax friends in legislative councils in the grander operations of his future years. Before setting off for Redstone Creek, he discharged Trent's refractory men from his detachment, ordering them

to await Colonel Fry's commands; they, however, in the true spirit of volunteers from the backwoods, dispersed to their several homes.

It may be as well to observe, in this place, that both Captain Trent and Lieutenant Frazier were severely censured for being absent from their post at the time of the French summons. "Trent's behaviour," said Washington, in a letter to Governor Dinwiddie, "has been very tardy, and has convinced the world of what they before suspected —his great timidity. Lieutenant Frazier, though not altogether blameless, is much more excusable, for he would not accept of the commission until he had a promise from his captain that he should not reside at the fort, nor visit it above once a week, or as he saw necessity." In fact, Washington subsequently recommended Frazier for the office of adjutant.

CHAPTER XI.

March to the Little Meadows—Rumours from the Ohio—Correspondence from the Banks of the Youhiogany—Attempt to descend that River—Alarming Reports—Scouting Parties—Perilous Situation of the Camp Gist and La Force—Message from the Half-King—French Tracks—The Jumonville Skirmish Treatment of La Force—Position at the Great Meadows—Belligerent Feelings of a young Soldier.

On the 29th of April, Washington set out from Wills' Creek at the head of one hundred and sixty men. He soon overtook those sent in advance to work the road; they had made but little progress. It was a difficult task to break a road through the wilderness sufficient for the artillery, coming on with Colonel Fry's division. All hands were now set to work, but with all their labour they could not accomplish more than four miles a-day. They were toiling through Savage Mountain and that dreary forest region beyond it, since bearing the sinister name of "The Shades of Death." On the 9th of May they were not further than twenty miles from Wills' Creek, at a place called the Little Meadows.

Every day came gloomy accounts from the Ohio; brought chiefly by traders, who, with packhorses bearing their

effects, were retreating to the more settled parts of the country. Some exaggerated the number of the French, as if strongly reinforced. All represented them as diligently at work constructing a fort. By their account Washington perceived the French had chosen the very place which he had noted in his journal as best fitted for the purpose.

One of the traders gave information concerning La Force, the French emissary, who had beset Washington when on his mission to the frontier, and acted, as he thought, the part of a spy. He had been at Gist's new settlement beyond Laurel Hill, and was prowling about the country with four soldiers at his heels on a pretended hunt after deserters. Washington suspected him to be on a reconnoitering expedition.

It was reported, moreover, that the French were lavishing presents on the Indians about the lower part of the river, to draw them to their standard. Among all these flying reports and alarms Washington was gratified to learn that the half-king was on his way to meet him at the head of fifty warriors.

After infinite toil through swamps and forests, and over rugged mountains, the detachment arrived at the Youhiogany River, where they were detained some days constructing a bridge to cross it.

This gave Washington leisure to correspond with Governor Dinwiddie, concerning matters which had deeply annoyed him. By an ill-judged economy of the Virginia government at this critical juncture, its provincial officers received less pay than that allowed in the regular army. It is true the regular officers were obliged to furnish their own table, but their superior pay enabled them to do it luxuriously; whereas the provincials were obliged to do hard duty on salt provisions and water. The provincial officers resented this inferiority of pay as an indignity, and declared that nothing prevented them from throwing up their commissions but unwillingness to recede before approaching danger.

Washington shared deeply this feeling, "Let him serve voluntarily, and he would, with the greatest pleasure in life, devote his services to the expedition; but to be slaving through woods, rocks, and mountains, for the

shadow of pay," writes he, "I would rather toil like a day-labourer for a maintenance, if reduced to the necessity, than serve on such ignoble terms." Parity of pay was indispensable to the dignity of the service.

Other instances of false economy were pointed out by him, forming so many drags upon the expedition, that he quite despaired of success. "Be the consequence what it will, however," adds he, "I am determined not to leave the regiment, but to be among the last men that leave the Ohio, even if I serve as a private volunteer, which I greatly prefer to the establishment we are upon. * * * * I have a constitution hardy enough to encounter and undergo the most severe trials, and, I flatter myself, resolution to face what any man dares, as shall be proved when it comes to the test."

And in a letter to his friend Colonel Fairfax—"For my own part," writes he, "it is a matter almost indifferent whether I serve for full pay or as a generous volunteer; indeed, did my circumstances correspond with my inclinations, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter; *for the motives that have led me here are pure and noble. I had no view of acquisition but that of honour, by serving faithfully my king and country.*"

Such were the noble impulses of Washington at the age of twenty-two, and such continued to actuate him throughout life. We have put the latter part of the quotation in italics, as applicable to the motives which in after-life carried him into the Revolution.

While the bridge over the Youhiogany was in the course of construction, the Indians assured Washington he would never be able to open a waggon-road across the mountains to Redstone Creek; he embarked, therefore, in a canoe with a lieutenant, three soldiers, and an Indian guide, to try whether it was possible to descend the river. They had not descended above ten miles before the Indian refused to go further. Washington soon ascertained the reason. "Indians," said he, "expect presents—nothing can be done without them. The French take this method. If you want one or more to conduct a party, to discover the country, to hunt, or for any particular purpose, they must be bought; their friendship is not so warm as to

prompt them to these services gratis." The Indian guide, in the present instance, was propitiated by the promise of one of Washington's ruffled shirts and a watch-coat.

The river was bordered by mountains and obstructed by rocks and rapids. Indians might thread such a labyrinth in their light canoes, but it would never admit the transportation of troops and military stores. Washington kept on for thirty miles, until he came to a place where the river fell nearly forty feet in the space of fifty yards. There he ceased to explore, and returned to camp resolving to continue forward by land.

On the 23rd Indian scouts brought word that the French were not above eight hundred strong, and that about half their number had been detached at night on a secret expedition. Close upon this report came a message from the half-king, addressed "to the first of his majesty's officers whom it may concern."

"It is reported," said he, "that the French army is coming to meet Major Washington. Be on your guard against them, my brethren, for they intend to strike the first English they shall see. They have been on their march two days. I know not their number. The half-king and the rest of the chiefs will be with you in five days to hold a council."

In the evening Washington was told that the French were crossing the ford of the Youhiogany, about eighteen miles distant. He now hastened to take a position in a place called the Great Meadows, where he caused the bushes to be cleared away, made an intrenchment, and prepared what he termed "a charming field for an encounter."

A party of scouts were mounted on waggon-horses and sent out to reconnoitre. They returned without having seen an enemy. A sensitiveness prevailed in the camp. They were surrounded by forests, threatened by unseen foes, and hourly in danger of surprise. There was an alarm about two o'clock in the morning. The sentries fired upon what they took to be prowling foes. The troops sprang to arms, and remained on the alert until daybreak. Not an enemy was to be seen. The roll was called. Six men were missing, who had deserted.

On the 25th Mr. Gist arrived from his place about fifteen miles distant. La Force had been there at noon on the previous day with a detachment of fifty men, and Gist had since come upon their track within five miles of the camp. Washington considered La Force a bold, enterprising man, subtle and dangerous; one to be particularly guarded against. He detached seventy-five men in pursuit of him and his prowling band.

About nine o'clock at night came an Indian messenger from the half-king, who was encamped with several of his people about six miles off. The chief had seen tracks of two Frenchmen, and was convinced their whole body must be in ambush near by.

Washington considered this the force which had been hovering about him for several days, and determined to forestall their hostile designs. Leaving a guard with the baggage and ammunition, he set out before ten o'clock, with forty men, to join his Indian ally. They groped their way, in single file, by footpaths through the woods, in a heavy rain and murky darkness, tripping occasionally and stumbling over each other, sometimes losing the track for fifteen or twenty minutes; so that it was near sunrise when they reached the camp of the half-king.

That chieftain received the youthful commander with great demonstrations of friendship, and engaged to go hand in hand with him against the lurking enemy. He set out accordingly, accompanied by a few of his warriors and his associate sachem Scarooyadi or Monacatoocha, and conducted Washington to the tracks which he had discovered. Upon these he put two of his Indians. They followed them up like hounds, and brought back word that they had traced them to a low bottom surrounded by rocks and trees, where the French were encamped, having built a few cabins for shelter from the rain.

A plan was now concerted to come upon them by surprise; Washington with his men on the right, the half-king with his warriors on the left—all as silently as possible. Washington was the first upon the ground. As he advanced from among the rocks and trees, at the head of his men, the French caught sight of him and ran to their arms. A sharp firing instantly took place, and was kept

up on both sides for about fifteen minutes. Washington and his party were most exposed, and received all the enemy's fire. The balls whistled around him; one man was killed close by him and three others wounded. The French at length, having lost several of their number, gave way and ran. They were soon overtaken; twenty-one were captured, and but one escaped, a Canadian, who carried the tidings of the affair to the fort on the Ohio. The Indians would have massacred the prisoners had not Washington prevented them. Ten of the French had fallen in the skirmish, and one been wounded. Washington's loss was the one killed and three wounded which we have mentioned. He had been in the hottest fire, and, having for the first time heard balls whistle about him, considered his escape miraculous. Jumonville, the French leader, had been shot through the head at the first fire. He was a young officer of merit, and his fate was made the subject of lamentation in prose and verse—chiefly through political motives.

Of the twenty-one prisoners, the two most important were an officer of some consequence, named Drouillon, and the subtle and redoubtable La Force. As Washington considered the latter an arch mischief-maker, he was rejoiced to have him in his power. La Force and his companion would fain have assumed the sacred character of ambassadors, pretending they were coming with a summons to him to depart from the territories belonging to the crown of France.

Unluckily for their pretensions, a letter of instructions, found on Jumonville, betrayed their real errand, which was to inform themselves of the roads, rivers, and other features of the country as far as the Potomac; to send back, from time to time, by fleet messengers, all the information they could collect, and to give word of the day on which they intended to serve the summons.

Their conduct had been conformable. Instead of coming in a direct and open manner to his encampment, when they had ascertained where it was, and delivering their summons, as they would have done had their designs been frank and loyal, they had moved back two miles, to one of the most secret retirements, better for a deserter

than an ambassador to encamp in, and stayed there, within five miles of his camp, sending spies to reconnoitre it, and despatching messengers to Contrecœur to inform him of its position and numerical strength, to the end, no doubt, that he might send a sufficient detachment to enforce the summons as soon as it should be given. In fact, the footprints which had first led to the discovery of the French lurking-place, were those of two "runners," or swift messengers, sent by Jumonville to the fort on the Ohio.

It would seem that La Force, after all, was but an instrument in the hands of his commanding officers, and not in their full confidence; for when the commission and instructions found on Jumonville were read before him, he professed not to have seen them before, and acknowledged, with somewhat of an air of ingenuousness, that he believed they had a hostile tendency.[1]

Upon the whole, it was the opinion of Washington and his officers that the summons, on which so much stress was laid, was a mere specious pretext to mask their real designs, and be used as occasion might require. "That they were spies rather than anything else," and were to be treated as prisoners of war.

The half-king joined heartily in this opinion; indeed, had the fate of the prisoners been in his hands, neither diplomacy nor anything else would have been of avail. "They came with hostile intentions," he said; "they had bad hearts, and if his English brothers were so foolish as to let them go he would never aid in taking another Frenchman."

The prisoners were accordingly conducted to the camp at the Great Meadows, and sent on the following day (29th), under a strong escort, to Governor Dinwiddie, then at Winchester. Washington had treated them with great courtesy; had furnished Drouillon and La Force with clothing from his own scanty stock, and, at their request, given them letters to the governor, bespeaking for them "the respect and favour due to their character and personal merit."

A sense of duty, however, obliged him, in his general

[1] Washington's letter to Dinwiddie, 29th May, 1754.

despatch, to put the governor on his guard against La Force. "I really think, if released, he would do more to our disservice than fifty other men, as he is a person whose active spirit leads him into all parties, and has brought him acquainted with all parts of the country. Add to this a perfect knowledge of the Indian tongue, and great influence with the Indians."

After the departure of the prisoners, he wrote again respecting them: "I have still stronger presumption, indeed almost confirmation, that they were sent as spies, and were ordered to wait near us till they were fully informed of our intentions, situation, and strength, and were to have acquainted their commander therewith, and to have been lurking here for reinforcements before they served the summons, if served at all.

"I doubt not but they will endeavour to amuse you with many smooth stories, as they did me; but they were confuted in them all, and, by circumstances too plain to be denied, almost made ashamed of their assertions.

"I have heard since they went away, they should say they called on us not to fire; but that I know to be false, for I was the first man that approached them, and the first whom they saw, and immediately they ran to their arms, and fired briskly till they were defeated." * * * * "I fancy they will have the assurance of asking the privileges due to an embassy, when in strict justice they ought to be hanged as spies of the worst sort."

The situation of Washington was now extremely perilous. Contrecœur, it was said, had nearly a thousand men with him at the fort, beside Indian allies; and reinforcements were on the way to join him. The messengers sent by Jumonville, previous to the late affair, must have apprised him of the weakness of the encampment on the Great Meadows. Washington hastened to strengthen it. He wrote by express also to Colonel Fry, who lay ill at Wills' Creek, urging instant reinforcements; but declaring his resolution to "fight with very unequal numbers rather than give up one inch of what he had gained."

The half-king was full of fight. He sent the scalps of the Frenchmen slain in the late skirmish, accompanied by black wampum and hatchets, to all his allies, summoning

them to take up arms and join him at Redstone Creek, "for their brothers, the English, had now begun in earnest." It is said he would even have sent the scalps of the prisoners had not Washington interfered.[2] He went off for his home, promising to send down the river for all the Mingoes and Shawnees, and to be back at the camp on the 30th, with thirty or forty warriors, accompanied by their wives and children. To assist him in the transportation of his people and their effects thirty men were detached, and twenty horses.

"I shall expect every hour to be attacked," writes Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, on the 29th, "and by unequal numbers, which I must withstand, if there are five to one, for I fear the consequence will be that we shall lose the Indians if we suffer ourselves to be driven back. Your honour may depend I will not be surprised, let them come at what hour they will, and this is as much as I can promise; but my best endeavours shall not be wanting to effect more. I doubt not, if you hear I am beaten, but you will hear at the same time that we have done our duty in fighting as long as there is a shadow of hope."

The fact is, that Washington was in a high state of military excitement. He was a young soldier; had been for the first time in action, and been successful. The letters we have already quoted show, in some degree, the fervour of his mind, and his readiness to brave the worst; but a short letter, written to one of his brothers, on the 31st, lays open the recesses of his heart.

"We expect every hour to be attacked by superior force; but if they forbear one day longer we shall be prepared for them. * * * * We have already got intrenchments, and are about a palisade, which, I hope, will be finished to-day. The Mingoes have struck the French, and, I hope, will give a good blow before they have done. I expect forty odd of them here to-night, which, with our fort, and some reinforcements from Colonel Fry, will enable us to exert our noble courage with spirit."

Alluding in a postscript to the late affair, he adds: "I fortunately escaped without any wound; for the right

[2] Letter from Virginia.—*London Magazine*, 1754.

wing, where I stood, was exposed to, and received, all the enemy's fire; and it was the part where the man was killed and the rest wounded. *I heard the bullets whistle, and, believe me, there is something charming in the sound.*"

This rodomontade, as Horace Walpole terms it, reached the ears of George II. "He would not say so," observed the king, dryly, "if he had been used to hear many."[3]

Washington himself thought so when more experienced in warfare. Being asked, many years afterwards, whether he really had made such a speech about the whistling of bullets, "If I said so," replied he quietly, "it was when I was young."[4] He was, indeed, but twenty-two years old when he said it; it was just after his first battle; he was flushed with success, and was writing to a brother.

CHAPTER XII.

Scarcity in the Camp—Death of Colonel Fry—Promotions—Mackay and his Independent Company—Major Muse—Indian Ceremonials—Public Prayers in Camp—Alarms—Independence of an Independent Company—Affairs at the Great Meadows—Desertion of the Indian Allies—Capitulation of Fort Necessity—Van Braam as an Interpreter—Indian Plunderers—Return to Williamsburg—Vote of Thanks of the House of Burgesses—Subsequent Fortunes of the Half-King—Comments on the Affair of Jumonville and the Conduct of Van Braam.

Scarcity began to prevail in the camp. Contracts had been made with George Croghan for flour, of which he had large quantities at his frontier establishment; for he was now trading with the army as well as with the Indians. None,

[3] This anecdote has hitherto rested on the authority of Horace Walpole, who gives it in his memoirs of George II., and in his correspondence. He cites the rodomontade as contained in the express despatched by Washington, whom he pronounces a "brave braggart." As no despatch of Washington contains any rodomontade of the kind; as it is quite at variance with the general tenor of his character; and as Horace Walpole is well known to have been a "great gossip dealer," apt to catch up any idle rumour that would give piquancy to a paragraph, the story has been held in great distrust. We met with the letter recently, however, in a column of the London Magazine for 1754, p. 370, into which it must have found its way not long after it was written.

[4] Gordon, Hist. Am. War. vol. ii., p. 203.

however, made its appearance. There was mismanagement in the commissariat. At one time the troops were six days without flour; and even then had only a casual supply from an Ohio trader. In this time of scarcity the half-king, his fellow sachem, Scarooyadi, and thirty or forty warriors, arrived, bringing with them their wives and children—so many more hungry mouths to be supplied. Washington wrote urgently to Croghan to send forward all the flour he could furnish.

News came of the death of Colonel Fry at Wills' Creek, and that he was to be succeeded in the command of the expedition by Colonel Innes of North Carolina, who was actually at Winchester with three hundred and fifty North Carolina troops. Washington, who felt the increasing responsibilities and difficulties of his situation, rejoiced at the prospect of being under the command of an experienced officer, who had served in company with his brother Lawrence at the siege of Carthagena. The colonel, however, never came to the camp, nor did the North Carolina troops render any service in the campaign—the fortunes of which might otherwise have been very different.

By the death of Fry, the command of the regiment devolved on Washington. Finding a blank major's commission among Fry's papers, he gave it to Captain Adam Stephens, who had conducted himself with spirit. As there would necessarily be other changes, he wrote to Governor Dinwiddie in behalf of Jacob Van Braam. "He has acted as captain ever since we left Alexandria. He is an experienced officer, and worthy of the command he has enjoyed."

The palisaded fort was now completed, and was named Fort Necessity, from the pinching famine that had prevailed during its construction. The scanty force in camp was augmented to three hundred, by the arrival from Wills' Creek of the men who had been under Colonel Fry. With them came the surgeon of the regiment, Dr. James Craik, a Scotchman by birth, and one destined to become a faithful and confidential friend of Washington for the remainder of his life.

A letter from Governor Dinwiddie announced, however, that Captain Mackay would soon arrive with an independent company of one hundred men, from South Carolina.

The title of independent company had a sound ominous of trouble. Troops of the kind, raised in the colonies, under direction of the governors, were paid by the Crown, and the officers had king's commissions; such, doubtless, had Captain Mackay. "I should have been particularly obliged," writes Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, "if you had declared whether he was under my command, or independent of it. I hope he will have more sense than to insist upon any unreasonable distinction, because he and his officers have commissions from his majesty. Let him consider, though we are greatly inferior in respect to advantages of profit, yet we have the same spirit to serve our gracious king as they have, and are as ready and willing to sacrifice our lives for our country's good. And here, once more, and for the last time, I must say, that it will be a circumstance which will act upon some officers of this regiment, above all measure, to be obliged to serve upon such different terms, when their lives, their fortunes, and their operations are equally, and, I dare say, as effectually exposed as those of others, who are happy enough to have the king's commission."

On the 9th arrived Washington's early instructor in military tactics, Adjutant Muse, recently appointed a major in the regiment. He was accompanied by Montour, the Indian interpreter, now a provincial captain, and brought with him nine swivels, and a small supply of powder and ball. Fifty or sixty horses were forthwith sent to Wills' Creek to bring on further supplies, and Mr. Gist was urged to hasten forward the artillery.

Major Muse was likewise the bearer of a belt of wampum and a speech, from Governor Dinwiddie to the half-king; with medals for the chiefs, and goods for presents among the friendly Indians, a measure which had been suggested by Washington. They were distributed with that grand ceremonial so dear to the red man. The chiefs assembled, painted and decorated in all their savage finery; Washington wore a medal sent to him by the governor for such occasions. The wampum and speech having been delivered, he advanced, and with all due solemnity decorated the chiefs and warriors with the medals, which they were to wear in remembrance of their father the King of England.

Among the warriors thus decorated was a son of Queen Aliquippa, the savage princess whose good graces Washington had secured in the preceding year, by the present of an old watch-coat, and whose friendship was important, her town being at no great distance from the French fort. She had requested that her son might be admitted into the war councils of the camp, and receive an English name. The name of Fairfax was accordingly given to him, in the customary Indian form; the half-king being desirous of like distinction, received the name of Dinwiddie. The sachems returned the compliment in kind, by giving Washington the name of Connotaucarius; the meaning of which is not explained.

William Fairfax, Washington's paternal adviser, had recently counselled him by letter, to have public prayers in his camp, especially when there were Indian families there; this was accordingly done at the encampment in the Great Meadows, and it certainly was not one of the least striking pictures presented in this wild campaign—the youthful commander, presiding with calm seriousness over a motley assemblage of half-equipped soldiery, leathern-clad hunters and woodsmen, and painted savages with their wives and children, and uniting them all in solemn devotion by his own example and demeanour.

On the 10th there was agitation in the camp. Scouts hurried in with word, as Washington understood them, that a party of ninety Frenchmen were approaching. He instantly ordered out a hundred and fifty of his best men; put himself at their head, and leaving Major Muse with the rest, to man the fort and mount the swivels, sallied forth "in the full hope," as he afterwards wrote to Governor Dinwiddie, "of procuring him another present of French prisoners."

It was another effervescence of his youthful military ardour, and doomed to disappointment. The report of the scouts had been either exaggerated or misunderstood. The ninety Frenchmen in military array dwindled down into nine French deserters.

According to their account the fort at the fork was completed, and named Duquesne, in honour of the governor of Canada. It was proof against all attack, excepting with

bombs, on the land side. The garison did not exceed five hundred, but two hundred more were hourly expected, and nine hundred in the course of a fortnight.

Washington's suspicions with respect to La Force's party were justified by the report of these deserters; they had been sent out as spies, and were to show the summons if discovered or overpowered. The French commander, they added, had been blamed for sending out so small a party.

On the same day Captain Mackay arrived, with his independent company of South Carolinians. The cross-purposes which Washington had apprehended soon manifested themselves. The captain was civil and well disposed, but full of formalities and points of etiquette. Holding a commission direct from the king, he could not bring himself to acknowledge a provincial officer as his superior. He encamped separately, kept separate guards, would not agree that Washington should assign any rallying place for his men in case of alarm, and objected to receive from him the parole and countersign, though necessary for their common safety.

Washington conducted himself with circumspection, avoiding everything that might call up a question of command, and reasoning calmly whenever such question occurred; but he urged the governor by letter to prescribe their relative rank and authority. "He thinks you have not a power to give commissions that will command him. If so, I can very confidently say that his absence would tend to the public advantage."

On the 11th of June, Washington resumed the laborious march for Redstone Creek. As Captain Mackay could not oblige his men to work on the road unless they were allowed a shilling sterling a day; and as Washington did not choose to pay this, nor to suffer them to march at their ease while his own faithful soldiers were laboriously employed; he left the captain and his independent company as a guard at Fort Necessity, and undertook to complete the military road with his own men.

Accordingly he and his Virginia troops toiled forward through the narrow defiles of the mountains, working on the road as they went. Scouts were sent out in all directions to prevent surprise. While on the march he was

continually beset by sachems, with their tedious ceremonials and speeches, all to very little purpose. Some of these chiefs were secretly in the French interest; few rendered any real assistance, and all expected presents.

At Gist's establishment, about thirteen miles from Fort Necessity, Washington received certain intelligence that ample reinforcements had arrived at Fort Duquesne, and a large force would instantly be detached against him. Coming to a halt he began to throw up entrenchments, calling in two foraging parties, and sending word to Captain Mackay to join him with all speed. The captain and his company arrived in the evening, the foraging parties the next morning. A council of war was held, in which the idea of awaiting the enemy at this place was unanimously abandoned.

A rapid and toilsome retreat ensued. There was a deficiency of horses. Washington gave up his own to aid in transporting the military munitions, leaving his baggage to be brought on by soldiers, whom he paid liberally. The other officers followed his example. The weather was sultry, the roads were rough, provisions were scanty and the men dispirited by hunger. The Virginian soldiers took turns to drag the swivels, but felt almost insulted by the conduct of the South Carolinians, who, piquing themselves upon their assumed privileges as "king's soldiers," sauntered along at their ease; refusing to act as pioneers, or participate in the extra labours incident to a hurried retreat.

On the 1st of July they reached the Great Meadows. Here the Virginians, exhausted by fatigue, hunger, and vexation, declared they would carry the baggage and drag the swivels no further. Contrary to his original intentions, therefore, Washington determined to halt here for the present, and fortify, sending off expresses to hasten supplies and reinforcements from Wills' Creek, where he had reason to believe that two independent companies from New York were by this time arrived.

The retreat to the Great Meadows had not been in the least too precipitate. Captain de Villiers, a brother-in-law of Jumonville, had actually sallied forth from Fort Duquesne at the head of upwards of five hundred French,

and several hundred Indians, eager to avenge the death of his relative. Arriving about dawn of day at Gist's plantation, he surrounded the works which Washington had hastily thrown up there, and fired into them. Finding them deserted, he concluded that those of whom he came in search had made good their retreat to the settlements, and it was too late to pursue them. He was on the point of returning to Fort Duquesne, when a deserter arrived, who gave word that Washington had come to a halt in the Great Meadows, where his troops were in a starving condition; for his own part, he added, hearing that the French were coming, he had deserted to them to escape starvation.

De Villiers ordered the fellow into confinement; to be rewarded if his words proved true, otherwise to be hanged. He then pushed forward for the Great Meadows.[1]

In the mean time Washington had exerted himself to enlarge and strengthen Fort Necessity, nothing of which had been done by Captain Mackay and his men while encamped there. The fort was about a hundred feet square, protected by trenches and palisades. It stood on the margin of a small stream, nearly in the centre of the Great Meadows, which is a grassy plain, perfectly level, surrounded by wooded hills of a moderate height, and at that place about two hundred and fifty yards wide. Washington asked no assistance from the South Carolina troops, but set to work with his Virginians, animating them by word and example; sharing in the labour of felling trees, hewing off the branches, and rolling up the trunks to form a breastwork.

At this critical juncture he was deserted by his Indian allies. They were disheartened at the scanty preparations for defence against a superior force, and offended at being subjected to military command. The half-king thought he had not been sufficiently consulted, and that his advice had not been sufficiently followed; such, at least, were some of the reasons which he subsequently gave for abandoning the youthful commander on the approach of danger. The true reason was a desire to put his wife and children

[1] Hazard's Register of Pennsylvania, vol. iv., p. 229

in a place of safety. Most of his warriors followed his example; very few, and those probably who had no families at risk, remained in the camp.

Early in the morning of the 3rd, while Washington and his men were working on the fort, a sentinel came in wounded and bleeding, having been fired upon. Scouts brought word shortly afterwards that the French were in force, about four miles off. Washington drew up his men on level ground outside of the works, to await their attack. About 11 o'clock there was a firing of musketry from among trees on rising ground, but so distant as to do no harm; suspecting this to be a stratagem designed to draw his men into the woods, he ordered them to keep quiet, and refrain from firing until the foe should show themselves, and draw near.

The firing was kept up, but still under cover. He now fell back with his men into the trenches, ordering them to fire whenever they could get sight of an enemy. In this way there was skirmishing throughout the day; the French and Indians advancing as near as the covert of the woods would permit, which in the nearest place was sixty yards, but never into open sight. In the meanwhile the rain fell in torrents; the harassed and jaded troops were half drowned in their trenches, and many of their muskets were rendered unfit for use.

About eight at night the French requested a parley. Washington hesitated. It might be a stratagem to gain admittance for a spy into the fort. The request was repeated, with the addition that an officer might be sent to treat with them, under their parole for his safety. Unfortunately the Chevalier de Peyrouney, engineer of the regiment, and the only one who could speak French correctly, was wounded and disabled. Washington had to send, therefore, his ancient swordsman and interpreter, Jacob Van Braam. The captain returned twice with separate terms, in which the garrison was required to surrender; both were rejected. He returned a third time, with written articles of capitulation. They were in French. As no implements for writing were at hand, Van Braam undertook to translate them by word of mouth. A candle was brought, and held close to the paper while he read. The rain fell

in torrents; it was difficult to keep the light from being extinguished. The captain rendered the capitulation, article by article, in mongrel English, while Washington and his officers stood listening, endeavouring to disentangle the meaning. One article stipulated that on surrendering the fort they should leave all their military stores, munitions, and artillery in possession of the French. This was objected to, and was readily modified.

The main articles, as Washington and his officers understood them, were, that they should be allowed to return to the settlements without molestation from French or Indians. That they should march out of the fort with the honours of war, drums beating and colours flying, and with all their effects and military stores excepting the artillery, which should be destroyed. That they should be allowed to deposit their effects in some secret place, and leave a guard to protect them until they could send horses to bring them away; their horses having been nearly all killed or lost during the action. That they should give their word of honour not to attempt any buildings or improvements on the lands of his most Christian Majesty, for the space of a year. That the prisoners taken in the skirmish of Jumonville should be restored, and until their delivery Captain Van Braam and Captain Stobo should remain with the French as hostages.[2]

The next morning accordingly, Washington and his men marched out of their forlorn fortress with the honours of war, bearing with them their regimental colours, but leaving behind a large flag, too cumbrous to be transported. Scarcely had they begun their march, however, when, in defiance of the terms of capitulation, they were beset by a large body of Indians, allies of the French, who began plundering the baggage, and committing other irregularities. Seeing that the French did not, or could not, prevent them, and that all the baggage which could not be transported on the shoulders of his troops would fall into the

[2] Horace Walpole, in a flippant notice of this capitulation, says: "The French have tied up the hands of an excellent *funfaron*, a Major Washington, whom they took and engaged not to serve for one year." (Correspondence, vol. iii., p. 73.) Walpole, at this early date, seems to have considered Washington a perfect fire-eater.

hands of these savages, Washington ordered it to be destroyed, as well as the artillery, gunpowder, and other military stores. All this detained him until ten o'clock, when he set out on his melancholy march. He had not proceeded above a mile when two or three of the wounded men were reported to be missing. He immediately detached a few men back in quest of them, and continued on until three miles from Fort Necessity, where he encamped for the night, and was rejoined by the stragglers.

In this affair, out of the Virginia regiment, consisting of three hundred and five men, officers included, twelve had been killed, and forty-three wounded. The number killed and wounded in Captain Mackay's company is not known. The loss of the French and Indians is supposed to have been much greater.

In the following day's march the troops seemed jaded and disheartened; they were encumbered and delayed by the wounded; provisions were scanty, and they had seventy weary miles to accomplish before they could meet with supplies. Washington, however, encouraged them by his own steadfast and cheerful demeanour, and by sharing all their toils and privations; and at length conducted them in safety to Wills' Creek, where they found ample provisions in the military magazines. Leaving them here to recover their strength, he proceeded with Captain Mackay to Williamsburg, to make his military report to the governor.

A copy of the capitulation was subsequently laid before the Virginia House of Burgesses, with explanations. Notwithstanding the unfortunate result of the campaign, the conduct of Washington and his officers was properly appreciated, and they received a vote of thanks for their bravery, and gallant defence of their country. Three hundred pistoles (nearly eleven hundred dollars) also were voted to be distributed among the privates who had been in the action.

From the vote of thanks, two officers were excepted; Major Stobo, who was charged with cowardice, and Washington's unfortunate master of fence and blundering interpreter, Jacob Van Braam, who was accused of treachery, in purposely misinterpreting the articles of capitulation.

In concluding this chapter, we will anticipate dates to

record the fortunes of the half-king after his withdrawal from the camp. He and several of his warriors, with their wives and children, retreated to Aughquick, in the back part of Pennsylvania, where George Croghan had an agency, and was allowed money from time to time for the maintenance of Indian allies. By the by, Washington, in his letter to William Fairfax, expressed himself much disappointed in Croghan and Montour, who proved, he said, "to be great pretenders, and by vainly boasting of their interest with the Indians, involved the country in great calamity, causing dependence to be placed where there was none."[3] For, with all their boast, they never could induce above thirty fighting men to join the camp, and not more than half of those rendered any service.

As to the half-king, he expressed himself perfectly disgusted with the white man's mode of warfare. The French, he said, were cowards; the English, fools. Washington was a good man, but wanted experience: he would not take advice of the Indians, and was always driving them to fight according to his own notions. For this reason he (the half-king) had carried off his wife and children to a place of safety.

After a time the chieftain fell dangerously ill, and a conjurer or 'medicine man' was summoned to inquire into the cause or nature of his malady. He gave it as his opinion that the French had bewitched him, in revenge for the great blow he had struck them in the affair of Jumonville; for the Indians gave him the whole credit of that success, he having sent round the French scalps as trophies. In the opinion of the conjurer all the friends of the chieftain concurred, and on his death, which took place shortly afterwards, there was great lamentation, mingled with threats of immediate vengeance. The foregoing particulars are gathered from a letter written by John Harris, an Indian trader, to the Governor of Pennsylvania, at the request of the half-king's friend and fellow sachem, Manacatoocha, otherwise called Scarooyadi. "I humbly presume," concludes John Harris, "that his death is a very great loss, especially at this critical time."[4]

[3] Letter to W. Fairfax, Aug. 11th, 1754.

[4] Pennsylvania Archives, vol. ii., p. 178.

NOTE.

We have been thus particular in tracing the affair of the Great Meadows, step by step, guided by the statements of Washington himself and of one of his officers, present in the engagement, because it is another of the events in the early stage of his military career, before the justice and magnanimity of his character were sufficiently established, which have been subject to misrepresentation. When the articles of capitulation came to be correctly translated and published, there were passages in them derogatory to the honour of Washington and his troops, and which, it would seem, had purposely been inserted for their humiliation by the French commander; but which, they protested, had never been rightly translated by Van Braam. For instance, in the written articles, they were made to stipulate that for the space of a year, they would not work on any establishment beyond the mountains; whereas it had been translated by Van Braam "on any establishment *on the lands of the king of France*," which was quite another thing, as most of the land beyond the mountains was considered by them as belonging to the British crown. There were other points, of minor importance, relative to the disposition of the artillery; but the most startling and objectionable one was that concerning the previous skirmish in the Great Meadows. This was mentioned in the written articles as *l'assassinat du Sieur de Jumonville*, that is to say, the *murder* of De Jumonville; an expression from which Washington and his officers would have revolted with scorn and indignation; and which, if truly translated, would, in all probability, have caused the capitulation to be sent back instantly to the French commander. On the contrary, they declared it had been translated to them by Van Braam the *death* of De Jumonville.

M. de Villiers, in his account of this transaction to the French government, avails himself of these passages in the capitulation to cast a slur on the conduct of Washington. He says, "We made the English consent to sign that they had assassinated my brother in his camp."—"We caused them to abandon the lands belonging to the king. - We obliged them to leave their cannon, which consisted of nine pieces, &c." He further adds: "The English, struck with panic, took to flight, and left their flag and one of their colours." We have shown that the flag left was the unwieldy one belonging to the fort; too cumbrous to be transported by troops who could not carry their own necessary baggage. The regimental colours, as honourable symbols, were scrupulously carried off by Washington, and retained by him in after years.

M. de Villiers adds another incident intended to degrade his enemy. He says, "One of my Indians took ten Englishmen, whom he brought to me, and whom I sent back by another." These, doubtless, were the men detached by Washington in quest of the wounded loiterers; and who, understanding neither French nor Indian, found a difficulty in explaining their peaceful errand. That they were captured by the Indian seems too much of a gasconade.

The public opinion at the time was that Van Braam had been suborned by De Villiers to soften the offensive articles of the capitulation in translating them, so that they should not wound the pride nor awaken the scruples of Washington and his officers, yet should stand on record against them. It is not probable that a French officer of De Villiers' rank would practise such a base perfidy, nor does the subsequent treatment experienced by Van Braam from the French corroborate the charge. It is more than probable the inaccuracy of translation originated in his ignorance of the precise weight and value of words in the two languages, neither of which was native to him, and between which he was the blundering agent of exchange.

CHAPTER XIII.

Founding of Fort Cumberland—Secret Letter of Stobo—The Indian Messenger—Project of Dinwiddie His Perplexities—A Taint of Republicanism in the Colonial Assemblies—Dinwiddie's Military Measures—Washington quits the Service Overtures of Governor Sharpe of Maryland—Washington's dignified Reply—Questions of Rank between Royal and Provincial Troops—Treatment of the French Prisoners—Fate of La Force—Anecdotes of Stobo and Van Braam.

EARLY in August Washington rejoined his regiment, which had arrived at Alexandria by the way of Winchester. Letters from Governor Dinwiddie urged him to recruit it to the former number of three hundred men, and join Colonel Innes at Wills' Creek, where that officer was stationed with Mackay's independent company of South Carolineans, and two independent companies from New York; and had been employed in erecting a work to serve as a frontier post and rallying point; which work received the name of Fort Cumberland, in honour of the Duke of Cumberland, captain-general of the British army.

In the mean time the French, elated by their recent

triumph, and thinking no danger at hand, relaxed their vigilance at Fort Duquesne. Stobo, who was a kind of prisoner at large there, found means to send a letter secretly by an Indian, dated July 28, and directed to the commander of the English troops. It was accompanied by a plan of the fort. "There are two hundred men here," writes he, "and two hundred expected; the rest have gone off in detachments to the amount of one thousand, besides Indians. None lodge in the fort but Contrecœur and the guard, consisting of forty men and five officers; the rest lodge in bark cabins around the fort. The Indians have access day and night, and come and go when they please. If one hundred trusty Shawnees, Mingoes, and Delawares were picked out, they might surprise the fort, lodging themselves under the palisades by day, and at night secure the guard with their tomahawks, shut the sally-gate, and the fort is ours."

One part of Stobo's letter shows that he was not the coward that some had considered him. Alluding to the danger in which he and Van Braam, his fellow-hostage, might be involved, he says, "Consider the good of the expedition without regard to us. When we engaged to serve the country it was expected we were to do it with our lives. For my part, I would die a hundred deaths to have the pleasure of possessing this fort but one day. They are so vain of their success at the Meadows, it is worse than death to hear them. Haste to strike."[1]

The Indian messenger carried the letter to Aughquick, and delivered it into the hands of George Croghan. The Indian chiefs who were with him insisted upon his opening it. He did so, but on finding the tenor of it, transmitted it to the Governor of Pennsylvania. The secret information communicated by Stobo, may have been the cause of a project suddenly conceived by Governor Dinwiddie, of a detachment which, by a forced march across the mountains, might descend upon the French and take Fort Duquesne at a single blow; or, failing that, might build a rival fort in its vicinity. He accordingly wrote to Washington to march forthwith for Wills' Creek, with such

[1] Hazard's Register of Penn., vol. iv., p. 329.

companies as were complete, leaving orders with the officers to follow as soon as they should have enlisted men sufficient to make up their companies. "The season of the year," added he, "calls for despatch. I depend upon your usual diligence and spirit to encourage your people to be active on this occasion."

The ignorance of Dinwiddie in military affairs, and his want of forecast, led him perpetually into blunders. Washington saw the rashness of an attempt to dispossess the French with a force so inferior that it could be harassed and driven from place to place at their pleasure. Before the troops could be collected, and munitions of war provided, the season would be too far advanced. There would be no forage for the horses; the streams would be swollen and unfordable; the mountains rendered impassable by snow, and frost, and slippery roads. The men, too, unused to campaigning on the frontier, would not be able to endure a winter in the wilderness, with no better shelter than a tent: especially in their present condition, destitute of almost everything. Such are a few of the cogent reasons urged by Washington in a letter to his friend William Fairfax, then in the House of Burgesses, which, no doubt, was shown to Governor Dinwiddie, and probably had an effect in causing the rash project to be abandoned.

The governor, in truth, was sorely perplexed about this time, by contradictions and cross-purposes, both in military and civil affairs. A body of three hundred and fifty North Carolina troops had been enlisted at high pay, and were to form the chief reinforcement of Colonel Innes at Wills' Creek. By the time they reached Winchester, however, the provincial military chest was exhausted, and future pay seemed uncertain; whereupon they refused to serve any longer, disbanded themselves tumultuously, and set off for their homes without taking leave.

The governor found the House of Burgesses equally unmanageable. His demands for supplies were resisted on what he considered presumptuous pretexts; or granted sparingly, under mortifying restrictions. His high Tory notions were outraged by such republican conduct. "There appears to me," said he, "an infatuation in all

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the assemblies in this part of the world." In a letter to the Board of Trade, he declared that the only way effectually to check the progress of the French, would be an act of parliament requiring the colonies to contribute to the common cause, *independently of assemblies*; and in another, to the Secretary of State, he urged the policy of compelling the colonies to their duty to the king by a general poll-tax of two and sixpence a head. The worthy governor would have made a fitting counsellor for the Stuart dynasty. Subsequent events have shown how little his policy was suited to compete with the dawning republicanism of America.

In the month of October the House of Burgesses made a grant of twenty thousand pounds for the public service; and ten thousand more were sent out from England, besides a supply of firearms. The governor now applied himself to military matters with renewed spirit; increased the actual force to ten companies; and, as there had been difficulties among the different kinds of troops with regard to precedence, he reduced them all to independent companies, so that there would be no officer in a Virginia regiment above the rank of captain.

This shrewd measure, upon which Dinwiddie secretly prided himself as calculated to put an end to the difficulties in question, immediately drove Washington out of the service, considering it derogatory to his character to accept a lower commission than that under which his conduct had gained him a vote of thanks from the legislature.

Governor Sharpe, of Maryland, appointed by the king commander-in-chief of all the forces engaged against the French, sought to secure his valuable services, and authorized Colonel Fitzhugh, whom he had placed in temporary command of the army, to write to him to that effect. The reply of Washington (15 Nov.) is full of dignity and spirit, and shows how deeply he felt his military degradation.

"You make mention," says he, "of my continuing in the service and retaining my colonel's commission. This idea has filled me with surprise; for if you think me capable of holding a commission that has neither rank nor emolument annexed to it, you must maintain a very contemptible opinion of my weakness, and believe me more

empty than the commission itself." After intimating a suspicion that the project of reducing the regiment into independent companies, and thereby throwing out the higher officers, was "generated and hatched at Wills' Creek,"—in other words, was an expedient of Governor Dinwiddie, instead of being a peremptory order from England, he adds, "Ingenuous treatment and plain dealing I at least expected. It is to be hoped the project will answer; it shall meet with my acquiescence in everything except personal services. I herewith inclose Governor Sharpe's letter, which I beg you will return to him with my acknowledgments for the favour he intended me. Assure him, sir, as you truly may, of my reluctance to quit the service, and of the pleasure I should have received in attending his fortunes. Inform him, also, that it was to obey the call of honour and the advice of my friends that I declined it, and not to gratify any desire I had to leave the military line. My feelings are strongly bent to arms."

Even had Washington hesitated to take this step, it would have been forced upon him by a further regulation of government, in the course of the ensuing winter, settling the rank of officers of his Majesty's forces when joined or serving with the provincial forces in North America, "which directed that all such as were commissioned by the king, or by his general commander in-chief in North America, should take rank of all officers commissioned by the governors of the respective provinces. And further, that the general and field officers of the provincial troops should have no rank when serving with the general and field officers commissioned by the Crown; but that all captains and other inferior officers of the royal troops should take rank over provincial officers of the same grade, having older commissions."

These regulations, originating in that supercilious assumption of superiority which sometimes overruns and degrades true British pride, would have been spurned by Washington, as insulting to the character and conduct of his high-minded brethren of the colonies. How much did this open disparagement of colonial honour and understanding, contribute to wean from England the affection

of her American subjects, and prepare the way for their ultimate assertion of independence!

Another cause of vexation to Washington was the refusal of Governor Dinwiddie to give up the French prisoners, taken in the affair of De Jumonville, in fulfilment of the articles of capitulation. His plea was, that since the capitulation, the French had taken several British subjects, and sent them prisoners to Canada; he considered himself justifiable in detaining those Frenchmen which he had in his custody. He sent a flag of truce, however, offering to return the officer Drouillon, and the two cadets, in exchange for Captains Stobo and Van Braam, whom the French held as hostages; but his offer was treated with merited disregard. Washington felt deeply mortified by this obtuseness of the governor on a point of military punctilio and honourable faith, but his remonstrances were unavailing.

The French prisoners were clothed and maintained at the public expense, and Drouillon and the cadets were allowed to go at large; the private soldiers were kept in confinement. La Force, also, not having acted in a military capacity, and having offended against the peace and security of the frontier, by his intrigues among the Indians, was kept in close durance. Washington, who knew nothing of this, was shocked on visiting Williamsburg, to learn that La Force was in prison. He expostulated with the governor on the subject, but without effect; Dinwiddie was at all times pertinacious, but particularly so when he felt himself to be a little in the wrong.

As we shall have no further occasion to mention La Force, in connection with the subject of this work, we will anticipate a page of his fortunes. After remaining two years in confinement he succeeded in breaking out of prison, and escaping into the country. An alarm was given, and circulated far and wide, for such was the opinion of his personal strength, desperate courage, wily cunning, and great influence over the Indians, that the most mischievous results were apprehended should he regain the frontier. In the mean time he was wandering about the country, ignorant of the roads, and fearing to make inquiries, lest his foreign tongue should betray him.

He reached King and Queen Court House, about thirty miles from Williamsburg, when a countryman was struck with his foreign air and aspect. La Force ventured to put a question as to the distance and direction of Fort Duquesne, and his broken English convinced the countryman of his being the French prisoner, whose escape had been noised about the country. Watching an opportunity he seized him, and regardless of offers of great bribes, conducted him back to the prison of Williamsburg, where he was secured with double irons, and chained to the floor of his dungeon.

The refusal of Governor Dinwiddie to fulfil the article of the capitulation respecting the prisoners, and the rigorous treatment of La Force, operated hardly upon the hostages, Stobo and Van Braam, who, in retaliation, were confined in prison in Quebec, though otherwise treated with kindness. They, also, by extraordinary efforts, succeeded in breaking prison, but found it more difficult to evade the sentries of a fortified place. Stobo managed to escape into the country; but the luckless Van Braam sought concealment under an arch of a causeway leading from the fortress. Here he remained until nearly exhausted by hunger. Seeing the Governor of Canada passing by, and despairing of being able to effect his escape, he came forth from his hiding place, and surrendered himself, invoking his clemency. He was remanded to prison, but experienced no additional severity. He was subsequently shipped by the governor from Quebec to England, and never returned to Virginia. It is this treatment of Van Braam, more than anything else, which convinces us that the suspicion of his being in collusion with the French in regard to the misinterpretation of the articles of capitulation, was groundless. He was simply a blunderer.

CHAPTER XIV.

Return to Quiet Life—French and English prepare for Hostilities—Plan of a Campaign—General Braddock—His Character—Sir John St. Clair Quartermaster-General—His Tour of Inspection—Projected Roads—Arrival of Braddock—Military Consultations and Plans—Commodore Keppel and his Seamen—Ships and Troops at Alexandria—Excitement of Washington—Invited to join the Staff of Braddock—A Mother's Objections—Washington at Alexandria—Grand Council of Governors—Military Arrangements—Colonel William Johnson—Sir John St. Clair at Fort Cumberland—His Explosions of Wrath—Their Effects—Indians to be enlisted—Captain Jack and his Band of Bush-beaters.

Having resigned his commission, and disengaged himself from public affairs, Washington's first care was to visit his mother, inquire into the state of domestic concerns, and attend to the welfare of his brothers and sisters. In these matters he was ever his mother's adjunct and counsellor, discharging faithfully the duties of an eldest son, who should consider himself a second father to the family.

He now took up his abode at Mount Vernon, and prepared to engage in those agricultural pursuits, for which, even in his youthful days, he had as keen a relish as for the profession of arms. Scarcely had he entered upon his rural occupations, however, when the service of his country once more called him to the field.

The disastrous affair at the Great Meadows, and the other acts of French hostility on the Ohio, had roused the attention of the British ministry. Their ambassador at Paris was instructed to complain of those violations of the peace. The Court of Versailles amused him with general assurances of amity, and a strict adherence to treaties. Their ambassador at the Court of St. James, the Marquis de Mirepoix, on the faith of his instructions, gave the same assurances. In the mean time, however, French ships were fitted out, and troops embarked to carry out the schemes of the government in America. So profound was the dissimulation of the Court of Versailles, that even their own ambassador is said to have been kept in ignorance of

their real designs, and of the hostile game they were playing, while he was exerting himself in good faith, to lull the suspicions of England, and maintain the international peace. When his eyes, however, were opened, he returned indignantly to France, and upbraided the cabinet with the duplicity of which he had been made the unconscious instrument.

The British government now prepared for military operations in America; none of them professedly aggressive, but rather to resist and counteract aggressions. A plan of campaign was devised for 1755, having four objects.

To eject the French from lands which they held unjustly, in the province of Nova Scotia.

To dislodge them from a fortress which they had erected at Crown Point, on Lake Champlain, within what was claimed as British territory.

To dispossess them of the fort which they had constructed at Niagara, between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie.

To drive them from the frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia, and recover the valley of the Ohio.

The Duke of Cumberland, captain-general of the British army, had the organization of this campaign; and through his patronage, Major-general Edward Braddock was intrusted with the execution of it, being appointed generalissimo of all the forces in the colonies.

Braddock was a veteran in service, and had been upwards of forty years in the guards, that school of exact discipline and technical punctilio. Cumberland, who held a commission in the guards, and was bigoted to its routine, may have considered Braddock fitted, by his skill and preciseness as a tactician, for a command in a new country, inexperienced in military science, to bring its raw levies into order, and to settle those questions of rank and etiquette apt to arise where regular and provincial troops are to act together.

The result proved the error of such an opinion. Braddock was a brave and experienced officer; but his experience was that of routine, and rendered him pragmatical and obstinate, impatient of novel expedients "not laid down

in the books," but dictated by emergencies in a "new country," and his military precision, which would have been brilliant on parade, was a constant obstacle to alert action in the wilderness.[1]

Braddock was to lead in person the grand enterprise of the campaign, that destined for the frontiers of Virginia and Pennsylvania; it was the enterprise in which Washington became enlisted, and, therefore, claims our especial attention.

Prior to the arrival of Braddock, came out from England Lieutenant-Colonel Sir John St. Clair, deputy quartermaster-general. Eager to make himself acquainted with the field of operations, he made a tour of inspection, in company with Governor Sharpe, of Maryland, and appears to have been dismayed at sight of the impracticable wilderness, the region of Washington's campaign. From Fort Cumberland, he wrote in February to Governor Morris, of Pennsylvania, to have the road cut, or repaired, toward the head of the river Youhiogany, and another opened from Philadelphia for the transportation of supplies. "No general," writes he, "will advance with an army without having a communication open to the provinces in his rear, both for the security of retreat, and to facilitate the trans-

[1] Horace Walpole, in his letters, relates some anecdotes of Braddock which give a familiar picture of him in the fashionable life in which he had mingled in London, and are of value, as letting us into the private character of a man whose name has become proverbial in American history. "Braddock," says Walpole, "is a very Iroquois in disposition. He had a sister, who, having gamed away all her little fortune at Bath, hanged herself with a truly English deliberation, leaving a note on the table with these lines: 'To die is landing on some silent shore,' &c. When Braddock was told of it, he only said: 'Poor Fanny! I always thought she would play till she would be forced to tuck herself up.'"

Braddock himself had been somewhat of a spendthrift. He was touchy also, and punctilious. "He once had a duel," says Walpole, "with Colonel Glumley, Lady Bath's brother, who had been his great friend. As they were going to engage, Glumley, who had good humour and wit (Braddock had the latter) said: 'Braddock, you are a poor dog! here, take my purse, if you kill me you will be forced to run away, and then you will not have a shilling to support you.' Braddock refused the purse, insisted on the duel, was disarmed, and would not even ask for his life."

port of provisions, the supplying of which must greatly depend on your province."[2]

Unfortunately the governor of Pennsylvania had no money at his command, and was obliged, for expenses, to apply to his Assembly, "a set of men," writes he, "quite unacquainted with every kind of military service, and exceedingly unwilling to part with money on any terms." However, by dint of exertions, he procured the appointment of commissioners to explore the country, and survey and lay out the roads required. At the head of the commission was George Croghan, the Indian trader, whose mission to the Twightwees we have already spoken of. Times had gone hard with Croghan. The French had seized great quantities of his goods. The Indians, with whom he traded, had failed to pay their debts, and he had become a bankrupt. Being an efficient agent on the frontier, and among the Indians, he still enjoyed the patronage of the Pennsylvania government.

When Sir John St. Clair had finished his tour of inspection, he descended Wills' Creek and the Potomac for two hundred miles in a canoe to Annapolis, and repaired to Virginia to meet General Braddock. The latter had landed on the 20th of February at Hampton, in Virginia, and proceeded to Williamsburg to consult with Governor Dinwiddie. Shortly afterwards he was joined there by Commodore Keppel, whose squadron of two ships-of-war, and several transports, had anchored in the Chesapeake. On board of these ships were two prime regiments of about five hundred men each; one commanded by Sir Peter Halket, the other by Colonel Dunbar; together with a train of artillery, and the necessary munitions of war. The regiments were to be augmented to seven hundred men each by men selected by Sir John St. Clair from Virginia companies recently raised.

Alexandria was fixed upon as the place where the troops should disembark and encamp. The ships were accordingly ordered up to that place, and the levies directed to repair thither.

The plan of the campaign included the use of Indian

[2] Colonial Records, vol. vi., p. 300.

allies. Governor Dinwiddie had already sent Mr. Gist, son of the pioneer, Washington's guide in 1753, to engage the Cherokees and Catawbas, the bravest of the Southern tribes, whom he had no doubt would take up the hatchet for the English, peace being first concluded, through the mediation of his government, between them and the Six Nations; and he gave Braddock reason to expect at least four hundred Indians to join him at Fort Cumberland. He laid before him also contracts that he had made for cattle, and promises that the Assembly of Pennsylvania had made of flour; these, with other supplies, and a thousand barrels of beef on board of the transports, would furnish six months' provisions for four thousand men.

General Braddock apprehended difficulty in procuring waggons and horses sufficient to attend him in his march. Sir John St. Clair, in the course of his tour of inspection, had met with two Dutch settlers, at the foot of the Blue Ridge, who engaged to furnish two hundred waggons, and fifteen hundred carrying horses, to be at Fort Cumberland early in May.

Governor Sharpe was to furnish above a hundred waggons for the transportation of stores, on the Maryland side of the Potomac.

Keppel furnished four cannons from his ships, for the attack on Fort Duquesne, and thirty picked seamen to assist in dragging them over the mountains: for "soldiers," said he, "cannot be as well acquainted with the nature of purchases, and making use of tackles, as seamen." They were to aid also in passing the troops and artillery on floats or in boats, across the rivers, and were under the command of a midshipman and lieutenant.[3]

"Everything," writes Captain Robert Orme, one of the general's aides-de-camp, "seemed to promise so far the greatest success. The transports were all arrived safe, and the men in health. Provisions, Indians, carriages, and horses, were already provided: at least were to be esteemed so, considering the authorities on which they were promised to the general."

Trusting to these arrangements, Braddock proceeded to

[3] Keppel's Life of Keppel, p. 205.

Alexandria. The troops had all been disembarked before his arrival, and the Virginia levies selected by Sir John St. Clair, to join the regiments of regulars, were arrived. There were beside two companies of hatchet men, or carpenters; six of rangers; and one troop of light horse. The levies, having been clothed, were ordered to march immediately for Winchester, to be armed, and the general gave them in charge of an ensign of the 44th, "to make them as like soldiers as possible."[4] The light horse were retained by the general as his escort and body guard.

The din and stir of warlike preparation disturbed the quiet of Mount Vernon. Washington looked down from his rural retreat upon the ships of war and transports, as they passed up the Potomac, with the array of arms gleaming along their decks. The booming of cannon echoed among his groves. Alexandria was but a few miles distant. Occasionally he mounted his horse and rode to that place; it was like a garrisoned town, teeming with troops, and resounding with the drum and fife. A brilliant campaign was about to open under the auspices of an experienced general, and with all the means and appurtenances of European warfare. How different from the starveling expeditions he had hitherto been doomed to conduct. What an opportunity to efface the memory of his recent disaster. All his thoughts of rural life were put to flight. The military part of his character was again in the ascendant; his great desire was to join the expedition as a volunteer.

It was reported to General Braddock. The latter was apprised by Governor Dinwiddie and others, of Washington's personal merits, his knowledge of the country, and his experience in frontier service. The consequence was, a letter from Captain Robert Orme, one of Braddock's aides-de-camp, written by the general's order, inviting Washington to join his staff; the letter concluded with frank and cordial expressions of esteem on the part of Orme, which were warmly reciprocated, and laid the foundation of a soldierlike friendship between them.

A volunteer situation on the staff of General Braddock

[4] Orme's Journal.

offered no emolument nor command, and would be attended with considerable expense, beside a sacrifice of his private interests, having no person in whom he had confidence, to take charge of his affairs in his absence; still he did not hesitate a moment to accept the invitation. In the position offered to him, all the questions of military rank which had hitherto annoyed him, would be obviated. He could indulge his passion for arms without any sacrifice of dignity, and he looked forward with high anticipation to an opportunity of acquiring military experience in a corps well organized and thoroughly disciplined, and in the family of a commander of acknowledged skill as a tactician.

His mother heard with concern of another projected expedition into the wilderness. Hurrying to Mount Vernon, she entreated him not again to expose himself to the hardships and perils of these frontier campaigns. She doubtless felt the value of his presence at home, to manage and protect the complicated interests of the domestic connection, and had watched with solicitude over his adventurous campaigning, where so much family welfare was at hazard. However much a mother's pride may have been gratified by his early advancement and renown, she had rejoiced on his return to the safer walks of peaceful life. She was thoroughly practical and prosaic in her notions; and not to be dazzled by military glory. The passion for arms which mingled with the more sober elements of Washington's character, would seem to have been inherited from his father's side of the house; it was, in fact, the old chivalrous spirit of the De Wessyngtons.

His mother had once prevented him from entering the navy, when a gallant frigate was at hand, anchored in the waters of the Potomac: with all his deference for her, which he retained through life, he could not resist the appeal to his martial sympathies, which called him to the head quarters of General Braddock at Alexandria.

His arrival was hailed by his young associates, Captains Orme and Morris, the general's aides-de-camp, who at once received him into frank companionship, and a cordial intimacy commenced between them, that continued throughout the campaign.

He experienced a courteous reception from the general, who expressed in flattering terms the impression he had received of his merits. Washington soon appreciated the character of the general. He found him stately and somewhat haughty, exact in matters of military etiquette and discipline, positive in giving an opinion, and obstinate in maintaining it; but of an honourable and generous, though somewhat irritable nature.

There were at that time four governors, beside Dinwiddie, assembled at Alexandria, at Braddock's request, to concert a plan of military operations; Governor Shirley, of Massachusetts; Lieutenant-governor Delancey, of New York; Lieutenant-governor Sharpe, of Maryland; Lieutenant-governor Morris, of Pennsylvania. Washington was presented to them in a manner that showed how well his merits were already appreciated. Shirley seems particularly to have struck him as the model of a gentleman and statesman. He was originally a lawyer, and had risen not more by his talents, than by his implicit devotion to the crown. His son Willam was military secretary to Braddock.

A grand council was held on the 14th of April, composed of General Braddock, Commodore Keppel, and the governors, at which the general's commission was read, as were his instructions from the king, relating to a common fund, to be established by the several colonies, towards defraying the expenses of the campaign.

The governors were prepared to answer on this head, letters to the same purport having been addressed to them by Sir Thomas Robinson, one of the king's secretaries of state, in the preceding month of October. They informed Braddock that they had applied to their respective Assemblies for the establishment of such a fund, but in vain, and gave it as their unanimous opinion, that such a fund could never be established in the colonies without the aid of Parliament. They had found it impracticable, also, to obtain from their respective governments the proportions expected from them by the crown, toward military expenses in America; and suggested that ministers should find out some mode of compelling them to do it; and that, in the mean time, the general should make use of his credit upon

government, for current expenses, lest the expedition should come to a stand.[1]

In discussing the campaign, the governors were of opinion that New York should be made the centre of operations, as it afforded easy access by water to the heart of the French possessions in Canada. Braddock, however, did not feel at liberty to depart from his instructions, which specified the recent establishments of the French on the Ohio as the objects of his expedition.

Niagara and Crown Point were to be attacked about the same time with Fort Duquesne, the former by Governor Shirley, with his own and Sir William Pepperell's regiments, and some New York companies; the latter by Colonel William Johnson, sole manager and director of Indian affairs; a personage worthy of especial note.

He was a native of Ireland, and had come out to this country in 1734, to manage the landed estates owned by his uncle, Commodore Sir Peter Warren, in the Mohawk country. He had resided ever since in the vicinity of the Mohawk River, in the province of New York. By his agency, and his dealings with the native tribes, he had acquired great wealth, and become a kind of potentate in the Indian country. His influence over the Six Nations was said to be unbounded; and it was principally with the aid of a large force of their warriors that it was expected he would accomplish his part of the campaign. The end of June, "nearly in July," was fixed upon as the time when the several attacks upon Fort Duquesne, Niagara, and Crown Point, should be carried into execution, and Braddock anticipated an easy accomplishment of his plans.

The expulsion of the French from the lands wrongfully held by them in Nova Scotia, was to be assigned to Colonel Lawrence, Lieutenant-governor of that province; we will briefly add, in anticipation, that it was effected by him, with the aid of troops from Massachusetts and elsewhere, led by Lieutenant-colonel Monckton.

The business of the Congress being finished, General Braddock would have set out for Fredericktown, in Maryland, but few waggons or teams had yet come to remove

[1] Colonial Records, vol. vi., p. 366.

the artillery. Washington had looked with wonder and dismay at the huge paraphernalia of war, and the world of superfluities to be transported across the mountains, recollecting the difficulties he had experienced in getting over them with his nine swivels and scanty supplies. "If our march is to be regulated by the slow movements of the train," said he, "it will be tedious, very tedious, indeed." His predictions excited a sarcastic smile in Braddock, as betraying the limited notions of a young provincial officer, little acquainted with the march of armies.

In the meanwhile, Sir John St. Clair, who had returned to the frontier, was storming at the camp at Fort Cumberland. The road required of the Pennsylvania government had not been commenced. George Croghan and the other commissioners were but just arrived in camp. Sir John, according to Croghan, received them in a very disagreeable manner; would not look at their draughts, nor suffer any representations to be made to him in regard to the province, "but stormed like a lion rampant;" declaring that the want of the road and of the provisions promised by Pennsylvania had retarded the expedition, and might cost them their lives from the fresh numbers of French that might be poured into the country.—"That instead of marching to the Ohio, he would in nine days march his army into Cumberland County to cut the roads, press horses, waggons, &c.—That he would not suffer a soldier to handle an axe, but by fire and sword oblige the inhabitants to do it. * * * That he would kill all kinds of cattle, and carry away the horses, burn the houses, &c.; and that if the French defeated them, by the delays of Pennsylvania, he would, with his sword drawn, pass through the province and treat the inhabitants as a parcel of traitors to his master. That he would write to England by a man-of-war; shake Mr. Penn's proprietaryship, and represent Pennsylvania as a disaffected province. * * * He told us to go to the general, if we pleased, who would give us *ten bad words for one that he had given*."

The explosive wrath of Sir John, which was not to be appeased, shook the souls of the commissioners, and they wrote to Governor Morris, urging that people might be set

at work upon the road, if the Assembly had made provision for opening it; and that flour might be sent without delay to the mouth of Conococheague River, "as being the only remedy left to prevent these threatened mischiefs."[6]

In reply, Mr. Richard Peters, Governor Morris's secretary, wrote in his name: "Get a number of hands immediately, and further the work by all possible methods. Your expenses will be paid at the next sitting of Assembly. Do your duty, and oblige the general and quartermaster if possible. Finish the road that will be wanted first, and then proceed to any other that may be thought necessary."

An additional commission, of a different kind, was intrusted to George Croghan. Governor Morris by letter requested him to convene at Aughquick, in Pennsylvania, as many warriors as possible of the mixed tribes of the Ohio, distribute among them wampum belts sent for the purpose, and engage them to meet General Braddock when on the march, and render him all the assistance in their power.

In reply, Croghan engaged to enlist a strong body of Indians, being sure of the influence of Scarooyadi, successor to the half-king, and of his adjunct, White Thunder, keeper of the speech-belts.[7] At the instance of governor Morris, Croghan secured the services of another kind of force. This was a band of hunters, resolute men, well acquainted with the country, and inured to hardships. They were under the command of Captain Jack, one of the most remarkable characters of Pennsylvania; a complete hero of the wilderness. He had been for many years a captive among the Indians; and, having learnt their ways, had formed this association for the protection of the settlements, receiving a commision of captain from the Governor of Pennsylvania. The band had become famous for its exploits, and was a terror to the Indians. Captain Jack was at present protecting the settlements on the Conococheague; but promised to march by a circuitous route and join Braddock with his hunters. "They require no shelter

[6] Colonial Records, vol. vi., p. 368. [7] Ibid., p. 375.

for the night," writes Croghan; "they ask no pay. If the whole army was composed of such men, there would be no cause of apprehension. I shall be with them in time for duty." [8]

[8] Hazard's Register of Penn., vol. iv., p. 416.

NOTE.

The following extract of a letter, dated August, 1750, gives one of the stories relative to this individual:—

"The 'Black Hunter,' the 'Black Rifle,' the 'Wild Hunter of Juniata,' is a white man; his history is this:—He entered the woods with a few enterprising companions; built his cabin; cleared a little land, and amused himself with the pleasures of fishing and hunting. He felt happy, for then he had not a care. But on an evening, when he returned from a day of sport, he found his cabin burnt, his wife and children murdered. From that moment he forsakes civilized man; hunts out caves, in which he lives; protects the frontier inhabitants from the Indians; and seizes every opportunity of revenge that offers. He lives the terror of the Indians and the consolation of the whites. On one occasion, near Juniata, in the middle of a dark night, a family were suddenly awaked from sleep by the report of a gun; they jump from their huts, and by the glimmering light from the chimney saw an Indian fall to rise no more. The open door exposed to view the wild hunter. 'I have saved your lives,' he cried, then turned and was buried in the gloom of night."—*Hazard's Register of Penn.*, vol. iv., 389.

CHAPTER XV.

Washington proclaimed Aide-de-Camp—Disappointments at Fredericktown—Benjamin Franklin and Braddock—Contracts—Departure for Wills' Creek—Rough Roads—The General in his Chariot—Camp at Fort Cumberland—Hugh Mercer—Dr. Craik—Military Tactics—Camp Rules—Secretary Peters—Indians in Camp—Indian Beauties—The Princess Bright Lightning—Errand to Williamsburg—Braddock's opinion of Contractors and Indians—Arrival of Conveyances.

General Braddock set out from Alexandria on the 20th of April. Washington remained behind a few days to arrange his affairs, and then rejoined him at Fredericktown, in Maryland, where, on the 10th of May, he was proclaimed one of the general's aides-de-camp. The troubles of Braddock had already commenced. The Virginian contractors failed to fulfil their engagements; of all the immense means of transportation so confidently promised, but fifteen waggons and a hundred draft-horses had arrived, and there was no prospect of more. There was equal disappointment in provisions, both as to quantity and quality; and he had to send round the country to buy cattle for the subsistence of the troops.

Fortunately, while the general was venting his spleen in anathemas against army contractors, Benjamin Franklin arrived at Fredericktown. That eminent man, then about forty-nine years of age, had been for many years member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, and was now postmaster-general for America. The Assembly understood that Braddock was incensed against them, supposing them adverse to the service of the war. They had procured Franklin to wait upon him, not as if sent by them, but as if he came in his capacity of postmaster-general, to arrange for the sure and speedy transmission of despatches between the commander-in-chief and the governors of the provinces.

He was well received, and became a daily guest at the general's table. In his autobiography, he gives us an instance of the blind confidence and fatal prejudices by which Braddock was deluded throughout this expedition. "In conversation with him one day," writes Franklin, "he was giving me some account of his intended progress.

'After taking Fort Duquesne,' said he, 'I am to proceed to Niagara; and, having taken that, to Frontenac, if the season will allow time; and I suppose it will, for Duquesne can hardly detain me above three or four days: and then I can see nothing that can obstruct my march to Niagara.'

"Having before revolved in my mind," continues Franklin, "the long line his army must make in their march by a very narrow road, to be cut for them through the woods and bushes, and also what I had heard of a former defeat of fifteen hundred French, who invaded the Illinois country, I had conceived some doubts and some fears for the event of the campaign; but I ventured only to say, 'To be sure, sir, if you arrive well before Duquesne with these fine troops, so well provided with artillery, the fort, though completely fortified, and assisted with a very strong garrison, can probably make but a short resistance. The only danger I apprehend of obstruction to your march, is from the ambuscades of the Indians, who, by constant practice, are dexterous in laying and executing them; and the slender line, nearly four miles long, which your army must make, may expose it to be attacked by surprise on its flanks, and to be cut like thread into several pieces, which, from their distance, cannot come up in time to support one another.'

"He smiled at my ignorance, and replied: 'These savages may indeed be a formidable enemy to raw American militia, but upon the king's regular and disciplined troops, sir, it is impossible they should make any impression.' I was conscious of an impropriety in my disputing with a military man in matters of his profession, and said no more."[1]

As the whole delay of the army was caused by the want of conveyances, Franklin observed one day to the general that it was a pity the troops had not been landed in Pennsylvania, where almost every farmer had his waggon. "Then, sir," replied Braddock, "you who are a man of interest there can probably procure them for me, and I beg you will." Franklin consented. An instrument in writing was drawn up, empowering him to contract for

[1] Autobiography of Franklin. Sparks' Edition, p. 190.

one hundred and fifty waggons, with four horses to each waggon, and fifteen hundred saddle or packhorses for the service of his majesty's forces, to be at Wills' Creek on or before the 20th of May, and he promptly departed for Lancaster to execute the commission.

After his departure, Braddock, attended by his staff, and his guard of light horse, set off for Wills' Creek by the way of Winchester, the road along the north side of the Potomac not being yet made. "This gave him," writes Washington, "a good opportunity to see the absurdity of the route, and of damning it very heartily."[2]

Three of Washington's horses were knocked up before they reached Winchester, and he had to purchase others. This was a severe drain of his campaigning purse; fortunately he was in the neighbourhood of Greenway Court, and was enabled to replenish it by a loan from his old friend Lord Fairfax.

The discomforts of the rough road were increased with the general by his travelling with some degree of state in a chariot which he had purchased of Governor Sharpe. In this he dashed by Dunbar's division of the troops, which he overtook near Wills' Creek; his body-guard of light horse galloping on each side of his chariot, and his staff accompanying him, the drums beating the Grenadier's march as he passed. In this style, too, he arrived at Fort Cumberland, amid a thundering salute of seventeen guns.[3]

By this time the general discovered that he was not in a region fitted for such display, and his travelling chariot was abandoned at Fort Cumberland, otherwise it would soon have become a wreck among the mountains beyond.

By the 19th of May the forces were assembled at Fort Cumberland. The two royal regiments, originally one thousand strong, now increased to fourteen hundred by men chosen from the Maryland and Virginia levies; two provincial companies of carpenters, or pioneers, thirty men each, with subalterns and captains; a company of guides, composed of a captain, two aids, and ten men; the troop of Virginia light horse, commanded by Captain

[2] Draft of a letter, among Washington's papers, addressed to Major John Carlyle.

[3] Journal of the Seamen's detachment.

Stewart; the detachment of thirty sailors, with their officers; and the remnants of two independent companies from New York, one of which was commanded by Captain Horatio Gates, of whom we shall have to speak much hereafter in the course of this biography.

Another person in camp, of subsequent notoriety, and who became a warm friend of Washington, was Dr. Hugh Mercer, a Scotchman, about thirty-three years of age. About ten years previously he had served as assistant-surgeon in the forces of Charles Edward, and followed his standard to the disastrous field of Culloden. After the defeat of the "chevalier," Mercer had escaped, by the way of Inverness, to America, and taken up his residence in Virginia. He was now with the Virginia troops, rallying under the standard of the House of Hanover, in an expedition led by a general who had aided to drive the chevalier from Scotland.[4]

Another young Scotchman in the camp was Dr. James Craik, who had become strongly attached to Washington, being about the same age, and having been with him in the affair of the Great Meadows, serving as surgeon in the Virginia regiment, to which he still belonged.

At Fort Cumberland Washington had an opportunity of seeing a force encamped according to the plan approved of by the council of war, and military tactics enforced with all the precision of a martinet.

The roll of each company was called over morning, noon, and night. There was strict examination of arms and accoutrements, the commanding officer of each company being answerable for their being kept in good order.

The general was very particular in regard to the appearance and drill of the Virginia recruits and companies, whom he had put under the rigorous discipline of Ensign Allen. "They performed their evolutions and firings as well as could be expected," writes Captain Orme, "but their languid, spiritless, and unsoldier-like appearance, considered with the lowness and ignorance of most of their officers, gave little hopes of their future good behaviour."[5]

[4] Braddock had been an officer under the Duke of Cumberland in his campaign against Charles Edward.

[5] Orme's Journal.

He doubtless echoed the opinion of the general. How completely were both to be undeceived as to their estimate of these troops!

The general held a levee in his tent every morning from ten to eleven. He was strict as to the morals of the camp. Drunkenness was severely punished. A soldier convicted of theft was sentenced to receive one thousand lashes, and to be drummed out of his regiment. Part of the first part of the sentence was remitted. Divine service was performed every Sunday, at the head of the colours of each regiment, by the chaplain. There was the funeral of a captain who died at this encampment. A captain's guard marched before the corpse, the captain of it in the rear, the firelocks reversed, the drums beating the dead march. When near the grave, the guard formed two lines, facing each other, rested on their arms, muzzles downwards, and leaned their faces on the butts. The corpse was carried between them, the sword and sash on the coffin, and the officers following two and two. After the chaplain of the regiment had read the service, the guard fired three volleys over the grave, and returned.[6]

Braddock's camp, in a word, was a complete study for Washington during the halt at Fort Cumberland, where he had an opportunity of seeing military routine in its strictest forms. He had a specimen, too, of convivial life in the camp, which the general endeavoured to maintain even in the wilderness, keeping a hospitable table; for he is said to have been somewhat of a *bon vivant*, and to have had with him "two good cooks, who could make an excellent ragout out of a pair of boots, had they but materials to toss them up with."[7]

There was great detention at the fort, caused by the want of forage and supplies, the road not having been finished from Philadelphia. Mr. Richard Peters, the secretary of Governor Morris, was in camp to attend to the matter. He had to bear the brunt of Braddock's complaints. The general declared he would not stir from Wills' Creek until he had the governor's assurance that the road would be opened in time. Mr. Peters requested

[6] Orme's Journal. Journal of the Seamen's detachment.

[7] Preface to Winthrop Sargent's Introductory Memoir.

guards to protect the men, while at work, from attacks by the Indians. Braddock swore he would not furnish guards for the woodcutters — "let Pennsylvania do it!" He scoffed at the talk about danger from Indians. Peters endeavoured to make him sensible of the peril which threatened him in this respect. Should an army of them, led by French officers, beset him in his march, he would not be able, with all his strength and military skill, to reach Fort Duquesne without a body of rangers, as well on foot as horseback. The general, however, "despised his observations."[8] Still, guards had ultimately to be provided, or the work on the road would have been abandoned.

Braddock, in fact, was completely chagrined and disappointed about the Indians. The Cherokees and Catawbas, whom Dinwiddie had given him reason to expect in such numbers, never arrived.

George Croghan reached the camp with but about fifty warriors, whom he had brought from Aughquick. At the general's request he sent a messenger to invite the Delawares and Shawnees from the Ohio, who returned with two chiefs of the former tribe. Among the sachems thus assembled were some of Washington's former allies — Scarooyadi, alias Monacatoocha, successor to the half-king; White Thunder, the keeper of the speech-belts; and Silver Heels, so called, probably, from being swift of foot.

Notwithstanding his secret contempt for the Indians, Braddock, agreeably to his instructions, treated them with great ceremony. A grand council was held in his tent, where all his officers attended. The chiefs, and all the warriors, came painted and decorated for war. They were received with military honours, the guards resting on their fire arms. The general made them a speech through his interpreter, expressing the grief of their father, the great king of England, at the death of the half-king, and made them presents to console them. They in return promised their aid as guides and scouts, and declared eternal enmity to the French, following the declaration with the war-song, "making a terrible noise."

The general, to regale and astonish them, ordered all the

[8] Colonial Records, vi., 396.

artillery to be fired, "the drums and fifes playing and beating the point of war." The fête ended by their feasting, in their own camp, on a bullock which the general had given them; following up their repast by dancing the war-dance, round a fire, to the sound of their uncouth drums and rattles, "making night hideous" by howls and yellings.

"I have engaged between forty and fifty Indians from the frontiers of your province to go over the mountains with me," writes Braddock to Governor Morris. "and shall take Croghan and Montour into service." Croghan was, in effect, put in command of the Indians, and a warrant given to him of captain.

For a time all went well. The Indians had their separate camp, where they passed half the night singing, dancing, and howling. The British were amused by their strange ceremonies, their savage antics, and savage decorations. The Indians, on the other hand, loitered by day about the English camp, fiercely painted and arrayed, gazing with silent admiration at the parade of the troops, their marchings and evolutions; and delighted with the horse-races, with which the young officers recreated themselves.

Unluckily the warriors had brought their families with them to Wills' Creek, and the women were even fonder than the men of loitering about the British camp. They were not destitute of attractions—for the young squaws resemble the gypsies, having seductive forms, small hands and feet, and soft voices. Among those who visited the camp was one who no doubt passed for an Indian princess. She was the daughter of the sachem, White Thunder, and bore the dazzling name of Bright Lightning.[9] The charms of these wild-wood beauties were soon acknowledged. "The squaws," writes Secretary Peters, "bring in money plenty; the officers are scandalously fond of them."[10]

The jealousy of the warriors was aroused; some of them became furious. To prevent discord, the squaws were forbidden to come into the British camp. This did not

[9] Seamen's Journal.

[10] Letter of Peters to Governor Morris.

prevent their being sought elsewhere. It was ultimately found necessary, for the sake of quiet, to send Bright Lightning, with all the other women and children, back to Aughquick. White Thunder, and several of the warriors, accompanied them for their protection.

As to the three Delaware chiefs, they returned to the Ohio, promising the general they would collect their warriors together, and meet him on his march. They never kept their word. "These people are villains, and always side with the strongest," says a shrewd journalist of the expedition.

During the halt of the troops at Wills' Creek, Washington had been sent to Williamsburg to bring on four thousand pounds for the military chest. He returned, after a fortnight's absence, escorted from Winchester by eight men, "which eight men," writes he, "were two days assembling, but I believe would not have been more than as many seconds dispersing if I had been attacked."

He found the general out of all patience and temper at the delays and disappointments in regard to horses, waggons, and forage, making no allowances for the difficulties incident to a new country, and to the novel and great demands upon its scanty and scattered resources. He accused the army contractors of want of faith, honour, and honesty; and in his moments of passion, which were many, extended the stigma to the whole country. This stung the patriotic sensibility of Washington, and overcame his usual self-command, and the proud and passionate commander was occasionally surprised by a well-merited rebuke from his aide-de-camp. "We have frequent disputes on this head," writes Washington, "which are maintained with warmth on both sides, especially on his, as he is incapable of arguing without it, or of giving up any point he asserts, be it ever so incompatible with reason or common sense."

The same pertinacity was maintained with respect to the Indians. George Croghan informed Washington that the sachems considered themselves treated with slight, in never being consulted in war matters. That he himself had repeatedly offered the services of the warriors under his command as scouts and outguards, but his offers had been rejected. Washington ventured to interfere, and to urge

their importance for such purposes, especially now when they were approaching the stronghold of the enemy. As usual, the general remained bigoted in his belief of the all-sufficiency of well-disciplined troops.

Either from disgust thus caused, or from being actually dismissed, the warriors began to disappear from the camp. It is said that Colonel Innes, who was to remain in command at Fort Cumberland, advised the dismissal of all but a few to serve as guides; certain it is, before Braddock recommenced his march, none remained to accompany him but Scarooyadi, and eight of his warriors.[11]

Seeing the general's impatience at the non-arrival of conveyances, Washington again represented to him the difficulties he would encounter in attempting to traverse the mountains with such a train of wheel-carriages, assuring him it would be the most arduous part of the campaign; and recommended, from his own experience, the substitution, as much as possible, of pack-horses. Braddock, however, had not been sufficiently harassed by frontier campaigning to depart from his European modes, or to be swayed in his military operations by so green a counsellor.

At length the general was relieved from present perplexities by the arrival of the horses and waggons which Franklin had undertaken to procure. That eminent man, with his characteristic promptness and unwearied exertions, and by his great personal popularity, had obtained them from the reluctant Pennsylvania farmers, being obliged to pledge his own responsibility for their being fully remunerated. He performed this laborious task out of pure zeal for the public service, neither expecting nor receiving emolument; and, in fact, experiencing subsequently great delay and embarrassment before he was relieved from the pecuniary responsibilities thus patriotically incurred.

The arrival of the conveyances put Braddock in good

[11] Braddock's own secretary, William Shirley, was disaffected to him. Writing about him to Governor Morris, he satirically observes: "We have a general most judiciously chosen for being disqualified for the service he is employed in, in almost every respect." And of the secondary officers: "As to them, I don't think we have much to boast. Some are insolent and ignorant; others capable, but rather aiming at showing their own abilities than making a proper use of them."—*Colonial Records*, vi., 405.

humour with Pennsylvania. In a letter to Governor Morris, he alludes to the threat of Sir John St. Clair to go through that province with a drawn sword in his hand. "He is ashamed of his having talked to you in the manner he did." Still the general made Franklin's contract for waggons the sole instance in which he had not experienced deceit and villany. "I hope, however, in spite of all this," adds he, "that we shall pass a merry Christmas together."

CHAPTER XVI.

March from Fort Cumberland—The Great Savage Mountain—Camp at the Little Meadows—Division of the Forces—Captain Jack and his Band—Scarooyadi in danger—Illness of Washington—His Halt at the Youghiogany—March of Braddock—The Great Meadows—Lurking Enemies—Their Tracks—Precautions—Thicketty Run—Scouts—Indian Murders—Funeral of an Indian Warrior—Camp on the Monongahela—Washington's arrival there—March for Fort Duquesne—The Fording of the Monongahela—The Battle—The Retreat—Death of Braddock.

On the 10th of June, Braddock set off from Fort Cumberland with his aides-de-camp, and others of his staff, and his body-guard of light-horse. Sir Peter Halket, with his brigade, had marched three days previously; and a detachment of six hundred men, under the command of Colonel Chapman, and the supervision of Sir John St. Clair, had been employed upwards of ten days in cutting down trees, removing rocks, and opening a road.

The march over the mountains proved, as Washington had foretold, a "tremendous undertaking." It was with difficulty the heavily-laden waggons could be dragged up the steep and rugged roads, newly made, or imperfectly repaired. Often they extended for three or four miles in a straggling and broken line, with the soldiers so dispersed, in guarding them, that an attack on any side would have thrown the whole in confusion. It was the dreary region of the great Savage Mountain, and the "Shades of Death" that was again made to echo with the din of arms.

What outraged Washington's notions of the abstemious frugality suitable to campaigning in the "backwoods," was

the great number of horses and waggons required by the officers for the transportation of their baggage, camp equipage, and a thousand articles of artificial necessity. Simple himself in his tastes and habits, and manfully indifferent to personal indulgences, he almost doubted whether such sybarites in the camp could be efficient in the field.

By the time the advanced corps had struggled over two mountains, and through the intervening forest, and reached (16th June) the Little Meadows, where Sir John St. Clair had made a temporary camp, General Braddock had become aware of the difference between campaigning in a new country, or on the old well beaten battle-grounds of Europe. He now, of his own accord, turned to Washington for advice, though it must have been a sore trial to his pride to seek it of so young a man; but he had by this time sufficient proof of his sagacity, and his knowledge of the frontier.

Thus unexpectedly called on, Washington gave his counsel with becoming modesty, but with his accustomed clearness. There was just now an opportunity to strike an effective blow at Fort Duquesne, but it might be lost by delay. The garrison, according to credible reports, was weak; large reinforcements and supplies, which were on their way, would be detained by the drought, which rendered the river by which they must come low and unnavigable. The blow must be struck before they could arrive. He advised the general, therefore, to divide his forces; leave one part to come on with the stores and baggage, and all the cumbrous appurtenances of an army, and to throw himself in the advance with the other part, composed of his choicest troops, lightened of everything superfluous that might impede a rapid march.

His advice was adopted. Twelve hundred men, selected out of all the companies, and furnished with ten field-pieces, were to form the first division, their provisions, and other necessaries, to be carried on packhorses. The second division, with all the stores, munitions, and heavy baggage, was to be brought on by Colonel Dunbar.

The least practicable part of the arrangement was with regard to the officers of the advance. Washington had urged a retrenchment of their baggage and camp equipage, that

as many of their horses as possible might be used as pack-horses. Here was the difficulty. Brought up, many of them, in fashionable and luxurious life, or the loitering indulgence of country quarters, they were so encumbered with what they considered indispensable necessaries, that out of two hundred and twelve horses generally appropriated to their use, not more than a dozen could be spared by them for the public service. Washington, in his own case, acted up to the advice he had given. He retained no more clothing and effects with him than would about half fill a portmanteau, and gave up his best steed as a pack-horse, which he never heard of afterwards.[1]

During the halt at the Little Meadows, Captain Jack and his band of forest rangers, whom Croghan had engaged at Governor Morris's suggestion, made their appearance in the camp; armed and equipped with rifle, knife, hunting-shirts, leggings and moccasins, and looking almost like a band of Indians as they issued from the woods.

The captain asked an interview with the general, by whom, it would seem, he was not expected. Braddock received him in his tent, in his usual stiff and stately manner. The "Black Rifle" spoke of himself and his followers as men inured to hardships, and accustomed to deal with Indians, who preferred stealth and stratagem to open warfare. He requested his company should be employed as a reconnoitering party, to beat up the Indians in their lurking-places and ambuscades.

Braddock, who had a sovereign contempt for the chivalry of the woods, and despised their boasted strategy, replied to the hero of the Pennsylvania settlements in a manner to which he had not been accustomed. "There was time enough," he said, "for making arrangements; and he had experienced troops, on whom he could completely rely for all purposes."

Captain Jack withdrew, indignant at so haughty a reception, and informed his leathern-clad followers of his rebuff. They forthwith shouldered their rifles, turned their backs upon the camp, and, headed by the captain, departed in Indian file through the woods, for the usual scenes of

[1] Letter to J. Augustine Washington. Sparks, ii., 81.

their exploits, where men knew their value, the banks of the Juniata or the Conococheague.[2]

On the 19th of June Braddock's first division set out, with less than thirty carriages, including those that transported ammunition for the artillery, all strongly horsed. The Indians marched with the advanced party. In the course of the day, Scarooyadi and his son being at a small distance from the line of march was surrounded and taken by some French and Indians. His son escaped, and brought intelligence to his warriors; they hastened to rescue or revenge him, but found him tied to a tree. The French had been disposed to shoot him, but their savage allies declared they would abandon them should they do so; having some tie of friendship or kindred with the chieftain, who thus rejoined the troops unharmed.

Washington was disappointed in his anticipations of a rapid march. The general, though he had adopted his advice in the main, could not carry it out in detail. His military education was in the way; bigoted to the regular and elaborate tactics of Europe, he could not stoop to the make-shift expedients of a new country, where every difficulty is encountered and mastered in a rough-and-ready style. "I found," said Washington, "that instead of pushing on with vigour, without regarding a little rough road, they were halting to level every mole hill, and to erect bridges over every brook, by which means we were four days in getting twelve miles."

For several days Washington had suffered from fever, accompanied by intense headache, and his illness increased in violence to such a degree that he was unable to ride, and had to be conveyed for a part of the time in a covered waggon. His illness continued without intermission until the 23d, "when I was relieved," says he, "by the general's absolutely ordering the physician to give me Dr. James's powders, one of the most excellent medicines in the world. It gave me immediate relief, and removed my fever and other complaints in four days' time."

[2] On the Conococheague and Juniata are left the history of their exploits. At one time you may hear of the band near Fort Augusta, next at Fort Franklin, then at Loudon, then at Juniata,—rapid were the movements of this hardy band.—*Hazard's Reg. Penn.*, iv., 300; also, v., 194.

He was still unable to bear the jolting of the waggon, but it needed another interposition of the kindly-intended authority of General Braddock to bring him to a halt at the great crossings of the Youhiogany. There the general assigned him a guard, provided him with necessaries, and requested him to remain, under care of his physician, Dr. Craik, until the arrival of Colonel Dunbar's detachment, which was two days' march in the rear; giving him his word of honour that he should, at all events, be enabled to rejoin the main division before it reached the French fort.[3]

This kind solicitude on the part of Braddock shows the real estimation in which he was held by that officer. Dr. Craik backed the general's orders, by declaring that should Washington persevere in his attempts to go on in the condition he then was his life would be in danger. Orme also joined his entreaties, and promised, if he would remain, he would keep him informed by letter of every occurrence of moment.

Notwithstanding all the kind assurances of Braddock and his aide-de-camp Orme, it was with gloomy feelings that Washington saw the troops depart; fearful he might not be able to rejoin them in time for the attack upon the fort, which, he assured his brother aide-de-camp, he would not miss for five hundred pounds.

Leaving Washington at the Youhiogany, we will follow the march of Braddock. In the course of the first day (June 24th), he came to a deserted Indian camp; judging from the number of wigwams, there must have been about one hundred and seventy warriors. Some of the trees about it had been stripped and painted with threats, and bravadoes, and scurrilous taunts written on them in the French language, showing that there were white men with the savages.

The next morning at daybreak, three men venturing beyond the sentinels, were shot and scalped; parties were immediately sent out to scour the woods, and drive in the stray horses.

The day's march passed by the Great Meadows and Fort Necessity, the scene of Washington's capitulation.

[3] Letter to John Augustine Washington. Sparks, ii, 80.

Several Indians were seen hovering in the woods, and the light horse and Indian allies were sent out to surround them, but did not succeed. In crossing a mountain beyond the Great Meadows, the carriages had to be lowered with the assistance of the sailors, by means of tackle. The camp for the night was about two miles beyond Fort Necessity. Several French and Indians endeavoured to reconnoitre it, but were fired upon by the advanced sentinels.

The following day (26th) there was a laborious march of but four miles, owing to the difficulties of the road. The evening halt was at another deserted Indian camp, strongly posted on a high rock, with a steep and narrow ascent; it had a spring in the middle, and stood at the termination of the Indian path to the Monongahela. By this pass the party had come which attacked Washington the year before, in the Great Meadows. The Indians and French too, who were hovering about the army, had just left this camp. The fires they had left were yet burning. The French had inscribed their names on some of the trees with insulting bravadoes, and the Indians had designated in triumph the scalps they had taken two days previously. A party was sent out with guides, to follow their tracks and fall on them in the night, but again without success. In fact, it was the Indian boast, that throughout this march of Braddock, they saw him every day from the mountains, and expected to be able to shoot down his soldiers "like pigeons."

The march continued to be toilful and difficult; on one day it did not exceed two miles, having to cut a passage over a mountain. In cleaning their guns the men were ordered to draw the charge, instead of firing it off. No fire was to be lighted in front of the pickets. At night the men were to take their arms into the tents with them.

Further on, the precautions became still greater. On the advanced pickets, the men were in two divisions, relieving each other every two hours. Half remained on guard with fixed bayonets, the other half laid down by their arms. The picket sentinels were doubled.

On the 4th of July they encamped at Thicketty Run. The country was less mountainous and rocky, and the woods, consisting chiefly of white pine, were more open. The general now supposed himself to be within thirty miles

of Fort Duquesne. Ever since his halt at the deserted camp on the rock beyond the Great Meadows, he had endeavoured to prevail upon the Croghan Indians to scout in the direction of the fort, and bring him intelligence, but never could succeed. They had probably been deterred by the number of French and Indian tracks, and by the recent capture of Scarooyadi. This day, however, two consented to reconnoitre; and shortly after their departure Christopher Gist, the resolute pioneer, who acted as guide to the general, likewise set off as a scout.

The Indians returned on the 6th. They had been close to Fort Duquesne. There were no additional works there; they saw a few boats under the fort, and one with a white flag coming down the Ohio; but there were few men to be seen, and few tracks of any. They came upon an unfortunate officer, shooting within half a mile of the fort, and brought a scalp as a trophy of his fate. None of the passes between the camp and fort were occupied; they believed there were few men abroad reconnoitering.

Gist returned soon after them. His account corroborated theirs; but he had seen a smoke in a valley between the camp and the fort, made probably by some scouting party. He had intended to prowl about the fort at night, but had been discovered and pursued by two Indians, and narrowly escaped with his life.

On the same day, during the march, three or four men loitering in the rear of the grenadiers were killed and scalped. Several of the grenadiers set off to take revenge. They came upon a party of Indians, who held up boughs and grounded their arms, the concerted sign of amity. Not perceiving or understanding it, the grenadiers fired upon them, and one fell. It proved to be the son of Scarooyadi. Aware too late of their error, the grenadiers brought the body to the camp. The conduct of Braddock was admirable on the occasion. He sent for the father and the other Indians, and condoled with them on the lamentable occurrence; making them the customary presents of expiation. But what was more to the point, he caused the youth to be buried with the honours of war; at his request the officers attended the funeral, and a volley was fired over the grave.

These soldierlike tributes of respect to the deceased and sympathy with the survivors, soothed the feelings and gratified the pride of the father, and attached him more firmly to the service. We are glad to record an anecdote so contrary to the general contempt for the Indians with which Braddock stands charged. It speaks well for the real kindness of his heart.

We will return now to Washington in his sick encampment on the banks of the Youhiogany, where he was left repining at the departure of the troops without him. To add to his annoyances, his servant, John Alton, a faithful Welshman, was taken ill with the same malady, and unable to render him any services. Letters from his fellow aides-de-camp, showed him the kind solicitude that was felt concerning him. At the general's desire, Captain Morris wrote to him, informing him of their intended hal s.

"It is the desire of every individual in the family," adds he, "and the general's positive commands to you, not to stir, but by the advice of the person [Dr. Craik] under whose care you are, till you are better, which we all hope will be very soon."

Orme, too, according to promise, kept him informed of the incidents of the march; the frequent night alarms, and occasional scalping parties. The night alarms Washington considered mere feints, designed to harass the men and retard the march; the enemy, he was sure, had not sufficient force for a serious attack; and he was glad to learn from Orme that the men were in high spirits and confident of success.

He now considered himself sufficiently recovered to rejoin the troops, and his only anxiety was that he should not be able to do it in time for the great blow. He was rejoiced, therefore, on the 3rd of July, by the arrival of an advanced party of one hundred men convoying provisions. Being still too weak to mount his horse, he set off with the escort in a covered waggon; and after a most fatiguing journey, over mountain and through forest, reached Braddock's camp on the 8th of July. It was on the east side of the Monongahela, about two miles from the river, in the neighbourhood of the town of Queen Aliquippa, and about fifteen miles from Fort Duquesne.

In consequence of adhering to technical rules and military forms, General Braddock had consumed a month in marching little more than a hundred miles. The tardiness of his progress was regarded with surprise and impatience even in Europe; where his patron, the Duke of Brunswick, was watching the events of the campaign he had planned. "The Duke," writes Horace Walpole, "is much dissatisfied at the slowness of General Braddock, *who does not march as if he was at all impatient to be scalped.*" The insinuation of the satirical wit was unmerited. Braddock was a stranger to fear; but in his movements he was fettered by system.

Washington was warmly received on his arrival, especially by his fellow aides-de-camp, Morris and Orme. He was just in time, for the attack upon Fort Duquesne was to be made on the following day. The neighbouring country had been reconnoitered to determine upon a plan of attack. The fort stood on the same side of the Monongahela with the camp; but there was a narrow pass between them of about two miles, with the river on the left and a very high mountain on the right, and in its present state quite impassible for carriages. The route determined on was to cross the Monongahela by a ford immediately opposite to the camp; proceed along the west bank of the river, for about five miles, then recross by another ford to the eastern side, and push on to the fort. The river at these fords was shallow, and the banks were not steep.

According to the plan of arrangement, Lieutenant-Colonel Gage, with the advance, was to cross the river before daybreak, march to the second ford, and recrossing there, take post to secure the passage of the main force. The advance was to be composed of two companies of grenadiers, one hundred and sixty infantry, the independent company of Captain Horatio Gates, and two six-pounders.

Washington, who had already seen enough of regular troops to doubt their infallibility in wild bush-fighting, and who knew the dangerous nature of the ground they were to traverse, ventured to suggest, that on the following day the Virginia rangers, being accustomed to the country and to Indian warfare, might be thrown in the advance. The proposition drew an angry reply from the

general, indignant, very probably, that a young provincial officer should presume to school a veteran like himself.

Early next morning (July 9th), before daylight, Colonel Gage crossed with the advance. He was followed, at some distance, by Sir John St. Clair, quartermaster-general, with a working party of two hundred and fifty men, to make roads for the artillery and baggage. They had with them their waggons of tools, and two six-pounders. A party of about thirty savages rushed out of the woods as Colonel Gage advanced, but were put to flight before they had done any harm.

By sunrise the main body turned out in full uniform. At the beating of the general, their arms, which had been cleaned the night before, were charged with fresh cartridges. The officers were perfectly equipped. All looked as if arrayed for a fête, rather than a battle. Washington, who was still weak and unwell, mounted his horse, and joined the staff of the general, who was scrutinising every thing with the eye of a martinet. As it was supposed the enemy would be on the watch for the crossing of the troops, it had been agreed that they should do it in the greatest order, with bayonets fixed, colours flying, and drums and fifes beating and playing.[4] They accordingly made a gallant appearance as they forded the Monongahela, and wound along its banks, and through the open forests, gleaming and glittering in morning sunshine and stepping buoyantly to the Grenadier's March.

Washington, with his keen and youthful relish for military affairs, was delighted with their perfect order and equipment, so different from the rough bush-fighters to which he had been accustomed. Roused to new life, he forgot his recent ailments, and broke forth in expressions of enjoyment and admiration as he rode in company with his fellow aides-de-camp, Orme and Morris. Often, in after-life, he used to speak of the effect upon him of this first sight of a well-disciplined European army, marching in high confidence and bright array, on the eve of a battle.

About noon they reached the second ford. Gage, with the advance, was on the opposite side of the Monongahela,

[4] Orme's Journal.

posted according to orders; but the river bank had not been sufficiently sloped. The artillery and baggage drew up along the beach and halted until one, when the second crossing took place, drums beating, fifes playing, and colours flying, as before. When all had passed, there was again a halt close by a small stream called Frazier's Run, until the general arranged the order of march.

First went the advance, under Gage, preceded by the engineers and guides and six light horsemen.

Then, Sir John St. Clair and the working party, with their waggons and the two six-pounders. On each side were thrown out four flanking parties.

Then, at some distance, the general was to follow with the main body, the artillery and baggage preceded and flanked by light horse and squads of infantry; while the Virginian, and other provincial troops, were to form the rear guard.

The ground before them was level until about half a mile from the river, where a rising ground, covered with long grass, low bushes, and scattered trees, sloped gently up to a range of hills. The whole country, generally speaking, was a forest, with no clear opening but the road, which was about twelve feet wide, and flanked by two ravines concealed by trees and thickets.

Had Braddock been schooled in the warfare of the woods, or had he adopted the suggestions of Washington, which he rejected so impatiently, he would have thrown out Indian scouts or Virginia rangers in the advance and on the flanks to beat up the woods and ravines; but, as has been sarcastically observed, he suffered his troops to march forward through the centre of the plain, with merely their usual guides and flanking parties, "as if in a review in St. James's Park."

It was now near two o'clock. The advanced party and the working party had crossed the plain and were ascending the rising ground. Braddock was about to follow with the main body, and had given the word to march, when he heard an excessively quick and heavy firing in front. Washington, who was with the general, surmised that the evil he had apprehended had come to pass. For want of scouting parties ahead the advance parties were suddenly

and warmly attacked. Braddock ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Burton to hasten to their assistance with the vanguard of the main body, eight hundred strong. The residue, four hundred, were halted, and posted to protect the artillery and baggage.

The firing continued, with fearful yelling. There was a terrible uproar. By the general's orders, an aide-de-camp spurred forward to bring him an account of the nature of the attack. Without waiting for his return, the general himself, finding the turmoil increase, moved forward, leaving Sir Peter Halket with the command of the baggage.[5]

The van of the advance had indeed been taken by surprise. It was composed of two companies of carpenters or pioneers to cut the road, and two flank companies of grenadiers to protect them. Suddenly the engineer who preceded them to mark out the road, gave the alarm, "French and Indians!" A body of them was approaching rapidly, cheered on by a Frenchman in gaily-fringed hunting-shirt, whose gorget showed him to be an officer. There was sharp firing on both sides at first. Several of the enemy fell, among them their leader; but a murderous fire broke out from among the trees and a ravine on the right, and the woods resounded with unearthly whoops and yellings. The Indian rifle was at work, levelled by unseen hands. Most of the grenadiers, and many of the pioneers, were shot down. The survivors were driven in on the advance.

Gage ordered his men to fix bayonets and form in order of battle. They did so in hurry and trepidation. He would have scaled a hill on the right, whence there was the severest firing. Not a platoon would quit the line of march. They were more dismayed by the yells than by the rifles of the unseen savages. The latter extended themselves along the hill and in the ravines; but their whereabouts was only to be known by their demoniac cries and the puffs of smoke from their rifles. The soldiers fired wherever they saw the smoke. Their officers tried in vain to restrain them until they should see their foe. All orders

[5] Orme's Journal.

were unheeded; in their fright they shot at random, killing some of their own flanking parties, and of the vanguard, as they came running in. The covert fire grew more intense. In a short time most of the officers, and many of the men, of the advance were killed or wounded. Colonel Gage himself received a wound. The advance fell back in dismay upon Sir John St. Clair's corps, which was equally dismayed. The cannon belonging to it were deserted.

Colonel Burton had come up with the reinforcement, and was forming his men to face the rising ground on the right, when both of the advanced detachments fell back upon him, and all now was confusion.

By this time the general was upon the ground. He tried to rally the men. "They would fight," they said, "if they could see their enemy; but it was useless to fire at trees and bushes, and they could not stand to be shot down by an invisible foe."

The colours were advanced in different places to separate the men of the two regiments. The general ordered the officers to form the men, tell them off into small divisions, and advance with them; but the soldiers could not be prevailed upon either by threats or entreaties. The Virginia troops, accustomed to the Indian mode of fighting, scattered themselves, and took post behind trees, where they could pick off the lurking foe. In this way they, in some degree, protected the regulars. Washington advised General Braddock to adopt the same plan with the regulars; but he persisted in forming them into platoons, consequently they were cut down from behind logs and trees as fast as they could advance. Several attempted to take to the trees without orders, but the general stormed at them, called them cowards, and even struck them with the flat of his sword. Several of the Virginians, who had taken post and were doing good service in this manner, were slain by the fire of the regulars, directed wherever a smoke appeared among the trees.

The officers behaved with consummate bravery; and Washington beheld with admiration those who, in camp or on the march, had appeared to him to have an almost effeminate regard for personal ease and convenience, now exposing themselves to imminent death with a courage that

kindled with the thickening horrors. In the vain hope of inspiriting the men to drive off the enemy from the flanks and regain the cannon, they would dash forward singly or in groups. They were invariably shot down; for the Indians aimed from their coverts at every one on horseback, or who appeared to have command.

Some were killed by random shot of their own men, who, crowded in masses, fired with affrighted rapidity, but without aim. Soldiers in the front ranks were killed by those in the rear. Between friend and foe the slaughter of the officers was terrible. All this while the woods resounded with the unearthly yellings of the savages; and now and then one of them, hideously painted, and ruffling with feathered crest, would rush forth to scalp an officer who had fallen, or seize a horse galloping wildly without a rider.

Throughout this disastrous day Washington distinguished himself by his courage and presence of mind. His brother aids, Orme and Morris, were wounded and disabled early in the action, and the whole duty of carrying the orders of the general devolved on him. His danger was imminent and incessant. He was in every part of the field a conspicuous mark for the murderous rifle. Two horses were shot under him. Four bullets passed through his coat. His escape without a wound was almost miraculous. Dr. Craik, who was on the field attending to the wounded, watched him with anxiety as he rode about in the most exposed manner, and used to say that he expected every moment to see him fall. At one time he was sent to the main body to bring the artillery into action. All there was likewise in confusion, for the Indians had extended themselves along the ravine so as to flank the reserve and carry slaughter into the ranks. Sir Peter Halket had been shot down at the head of his regiment. The men who should have served the guns were paralyzed. Had they raked the ravines with grapeshot the day might have been saved. In his ardour, Washington sprang from his horse, wheeled and pointed a brass field-piece with his own hand, and directed an effective discharge into the woods; but neither his efforts nor example were of avail. The men could not be kept to the guns.

Braddock still remained in the centre of the field, in the desperate hope of retrieving the fortunes of the day. The Virginia rangers, who had been most efficient in covering his position, were nearly all killed or wounded. His secretary, Shirley, had fallen by his side. Many of his officers had been slain within his sight, and many of his guard of Virginia light horse. Five horses had been killed under him; still he kept his ground, vainly endeavouring to check the flight of his men, or at least to effect their retreat in good order. At length a bullet passed through his right arm and lodged itself in his lungs. He fell from his horse, but was caught by Captain Stewart, of the Virginia guards, who, with the assistance of another American, and a servant, placed him in a tumbril. It was with much difficulty they got him out of the field—in his despair he desired to be left there.[6]

The rout now became complete. Baggage, stores, artillery, everything was abandoned. The waggoners took each a horse out of his team and fled. The officers were swept off with the men in this headlong flight. It was rendered more precipitate by the shouts and yells of the savages, numbers of whom rushed forth from their coverts and pursued the fugitives to the river side, killing several as they dashed across in tumultuous confusion. Fortunately for the latter, the victors gave up the pursuit in their eagerness to collect the spoil.

The shattered army continued its flight after it had crossed the Monongahela, a wretched wreck of the brilliant little force that had recently gleamed along its banks, confident of victory. Out of eighty-six officers, twenty-six had been killed, and thirty-six wounded. The number of rank and file killed and wounded was upwards of seven hundred. The Virginia corps had suffered the most; one company had been almost annihilated; another, beside those killed and wounded in the ranks, had lost all its officers, even to the corporal.

About a hundred men were brought to a halt about a quarter of a mile from the ford of the river. Here was Braddock, with his wounded aides-de-camp and some of

[6] Journal of the Seamen's detachment.

his officers; Dr. Craik dressing his wounds, and Washington attending him with faithful assiduity. Braddock was still able to give orders, and had a faint hope of being able to keep possession of the ground until reinforced. Most of the men were stationed in a very advantageous spot about two hundred yards from the road, and Lieutenant-Colonel Burton posted out small parties and sentinels. Before an hour had elapsed most of the men had stolen off. Being thus deserted, Braddock and his officers continued their retreat; he would have mounted his horse but was unable, and had to be carried by soldiers. Orme and Morris were placed on litters borne by horses. They were subsequently joined by Colonel Gage with eighty men whom he had rallied.

Washington, in the mean time, notwithstanding his weak state, being found most efficient in frontier service, was sent to Colonel Dunbar's camp, forty miles distant, with orders for him to hurry forward provisions, hospital stores, and waggons for the wounded, under the escort of two grenadier companies. It was a hard and a melancholy ride throughout the night and the following day. The tidings of the defeat preceded him, borne by the waggoners, who had mounted their horses on Braddock's fall, and fled from the field of battle. They had arrived, haggard, at Dunbar's camp at mid-day; the Indian yells still ringing in their ears. "All was lost!" they cried. "Braddock was killed! They had seen wounded officers borne off from the field in bloody sheets! The troops were all cut to pieces!" A panic fell upon the camp. The drums beat to arms. Many of the soldiers, waggoners, and attendants took to flight, but most of them were forced back by the sentinels.

Washington arrived at the camp in the evening, and found the agitation still prevailing. The orders which he brought were executed during the night, and he was in the saddle early in the morning accompanying the convoy of supplies. At Gist's plantation, about thirteen miles off, he met Gage and his scanty force escorting Braddock and his wounded officers. Captain Stewart and a sad remnant of the Virginia light horse still accompanied the general as his guard. The captain had been unremitting in his attentions to him during the retreat. There was a halt of one

day at Dunbar's camp for the repose and relief of the wounded. On the 13th they resumed their melancholy march, and that night reached the Great Meadows.

The proud spirit of Braddock was broken by his defeat. He remained silent the first evening after the battle, only ejaculating at night "who would have thought it!" He was equally silent the following day; yet hope still seemed to linger in his breast, from another ejaculation: "We shall better know how to deal with them another time!"[7]

He was grateful for the attentions paid to him by Captain Stewart and Washington, and more than once, it is said, expressed his admiration of the gallantry displayed by the Virginians in the action. It is said, moreover, that in his last moments he apologized to Washington for the petulance with which he had rejected his advice, and bequeathed to him his favourite charger and his faithful servant, Bishop, who had helped to convey him from the field.

Some of these facts, it is true, rest on tradition, yet we are willing to believe them, as they impart a gleam of just and generous feeling to his closing scene. He died on the night of the 13th at the Great Meadows, the place of Washington's discomfiture in the previous year. His obsequies were performed before break of day. The chaplain having been wounded, Washington read the funeral service. All was done in sadness, and without parade, so as not to attract the attention of lurking savages, who might discover and outrage his grave. It is doubtful even whether a volley was fired over it, that last military honour which he had recently paid to the remains of an Indian warrior. The place of his sepulture, however, is still known and pointed out.

Reproach spared him not even when in his grave. The failure of the expedition was attributed both in England and America to his obstinacy, his technical pedantry, and his military conceit. He had been continually warned to

[7] Captain Orme, who gave these particulars to Dr. Franklin, says that Braddock "died a few minutes after." This, according to his account, was on the second day; whereas the general survived upwards of four days. Orme, being conveyed on a litter at some distance from the general, could only speak of his moods from hearsay.

be on his guard against ambush and surprise, but without avail. Had he taken the advice urged on him by Washington and others to employ scouting parties of Indians and rangers, he would never have been so signally surprised and defeated.

Still his dauntless conduct on the field of battle shows him to have been a man of fearless spirit, and he was universally allowed to be an accomplished disciplinarian. His melancholy end, too, disarms censure of its asperity. Whatever may have been his faults and errors, he, in a manner, expiated them by the hardest lot that can befall a brave soldier, ambitious of renown—an unhonoured grave in a strange land; a memory clouded by misfortune, and a name for ever coupled with defeat.

NOTE.

In narrating the expedition of Braddock, we have frequently cited the Journals of Captain Orme and of the "Seamen's Detachment;" they were procured in England by the Hon. Joseph R. Ingersoll, while Minister at the Court of St. James, and recently published by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania: ably edited, and illustrated with an admirable Introductory Memoir by Winthrop Sargent, Esq., member of that Society.

CHAPTER XVII.

Arrival at Fort Cumberland—Letters of Washington to his Family—Panic of Dunbar—Fortunes of Dr. Hugh Mercer—Triumph of the French.

The obsequies of the unfortunate Braddock being finished, the escort continued its retreat with the sick and wounded. Washington, assisted by Dr. Craik, watched with assiduity over his comrades, Orme and Morris. As the horses which bore their litters were nearly knocked up, he despatched messengers to the commander of Fort Cumberland requesting that others might be sent on, and that comfortable quarters might be prepared for the reception of those officers.

On the 17th the sad cavalcade reached the fort, and were relieved from the incessant apprehension of pursuit. Here, too, flying reports had preceded them, brought by fugitives from the battle; who, with the disposition usual

in such cases to exaggerate, had represented the whole army as massacred. Fearing these reports might reach home, and affect his family, Washington wrote to his mother and his brother, John Augustine, apprising them of his safety. "The Virginia troops," says he, in a letter to his mother, "showed a good deal of bravery, and were nearly all killed. * * * The dastardly behaviour of those they called regulars exposed all others, that were ordered to do their duty, to almost certain death; and at last, in despite of all the efforts of the officers to the contrary, they ran as sheep pursued by dogs, and it was impossible to rally them."

To his brother he writes: "As I have heard, since my arrival at this place, a circumstantial account of my death and dying speech, I take this early opportunity of contradicting the first, and of assuring you that I have not composed the latter. But, by the all-powerful dispensations of Providence, I have been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me, yet escaped unhurt, though death was levelling my companions on every side of me!

"We have been most scandalously beaten by a trifling body of men, but fatigue and want of time prevent me from giving you any of the details, until I have the happiness of seeing you at Mount Vernon, which I now most earnestly wish for, since we are driven in thus far. A feeble state of health obliges me to halt here for two or three days to recover a little strength, that I may thereby be enabled to proceed homeward with more ease."

Dunbar arrived shortly afterward with the remainder of the army. No one seems to have shared more largely in the panic of the vulgar than that officer. From the moment he received tidings of the defeat his camp became a scene of confusion. All the ammunition, stores, and artillery were destroyed, to prevent, it was said, their falling into the hands of the enemy; but, as it was afterwards alleged, to relieve the terror-stricken commander from all incumbrances, and furnish him with more horses in his flight toward the settlements.[1]

[1] Franklin's Autobiography.

At Cumberland his forces amounted to fifteen hundred effective men; enough for a brave stand to protect the frontier and recover some of the lost honour; but he merely paused to leave the sick and wounded under care of two Virginia and Maryland companies, and some of the train, and then continued his hasty march, or rather flight, through the country, not thinking himself safe, as was sneeringly intimated, until he arrived in Philadelphia, where the inhabitants could protect him.

Among the wounded survivors of the defeat, who found their way to Fort Cumberland, was Washington's friend and neighbour, Dr. Hugh Mercer. He had received a severe wound in the shoulder, and being unable to keep up with the fugitives, concealed himself behind a fallen tree. Thence he was a sad witness of a demoniac scene, which followed the defeat. The field was strewed with the dead and dying, and among them several gallant officers. White man and red man vied with each other in stripping and plundering them; those who were still alive were despatched by the merciless tomahawk, and all were scalped. When the plunder and massacre were finished, the victors set out for the fort, laden with booty, the savages bearing aloft the scalps as trophies, and making the forest ring with their yells of triumph. Mercer then set out on a lonely struggle through the wilderness, guiding himself by the stars and the course of the streams, and arrived at Fort Cumberland almost exhausted by sickness, famine, and fatigue. We shall have to speak hereafter of his services when under the standard of Washington, and his heroic death on a more successful field of action.

The true reason why the enemy did not pursue the retreating army was not known until some time afterwards, and added to the disgrace of the defeat. They were not the main force of the French, but a mere detachment of 72 regulars, 146 Canadians, and 637 Indians—855 in all—led by Captain de Beaujeu. De Contrecœur, the commander of Fort Duquesne, had received information, through his scouts, that the English, three thousand strong, were within six leagues of his fort. Despairing of making an effectual defence against such a superior force,

he was balancing in his mind whether to abandon his fort without awaiting their arrival, or to capitulate on honourable terms. In this dilemma, Beaujeu prevailed on him to let him sally forth with a detachment to form an ambush and give check to the enemy. De Beaujeu was to have taken post at the river and disputed the passage at the ford. For that purpose he was hurrying forward when discovered by the pioneers of Gage's advance party. He was a gallant officer, and fell at the beginning of the fight. The whole number of killed and wounded of French and Indians did not exceed seventy.

Such was the scanty force which the imaginations of the panic-stricken army had magnified into a great host, and from which they had fled in breathless terror, abandoning the whole frontier. No one could be more surprised than the French commander himself, when the ambuscading party returned in triumph with a long train of packhorses laden with booty, the savages uncouthly clad in the garments of the slain—grenadier caps, officers' gold-laced coats, and glittering epaulettes—flourishing swords and sabres, or firing off muskets, and uttering fiend-like yells of victory. But when De Contrecœur was informed of the utter rout and destruction of the much-dreaded British army, his joy was complete. He ordered the guns of the fort to be fired in triumph, and sent out troops in pursuit of the fugitives.

The affair of Braddock remains a memorable event in American history, and has been characterized as "the most extraordinary victory ever obtained, and the farthest flight ever made." It struck a fatal blow to the deference for British prowess, which once amounted almost to bigotry throughout the provinces. "This whole transaction," observes Franklin, in his autobiography, "gave us the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regular troops had not been well founded."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Costs of Campaigning—Measures for Public Safety—Washington in Command—Head-Quarters at Winchester—Lord Fairfax and his Troop of Horse—Indian Ravages—Panic at Winchester—Cause of the Alarm—Operations elsewhere—Shirley against Niagara—Johnson against Crown Point—Affair at Lake George—Death of Dieskau.

WASHINGTON arrived at Mount Vernon on the 26th of July, still in feeble condition from his long illness. His campaigning, thus far, had trenched upon his private fortune, and impaired one of the best of constitutions.

In a letter to his brother Augustine, then a member of Assembly at Williamsburg, he casts up the result of his frontier experience. "I was employed," writes he, "to go a journey in the winter, when I believe few or none would have undertaken it, and what did I get by it?—my expenses borne! I was then appointed, with trifling pay, to conduct a handful of men to the Ohio. What did I get by that? Why, after putting myself to a considerable expense in equipping and providing necessaries for the campaign, I went out, was soundly beaten, and lost all! Came in, and had my commission taken from me; or, in other words, my command reduced, under pretence of an order from home (England). I then went out a volunteer with General Braddock, and lost all my horses and many other things. But this being a voluntary act, I ought not to have mentioned it; nor should I have done it, were it not to show that I have been on the losing order ever since I entered the service, which is now nearly two years."

What a striking lesson is furnished by this brief summary! How little was he aware of the vast advantages he was acquiring in this school of bitter experience! "In the hand of heaven he stood," to be shaped and trained for its great purposes; and every trial and vicissitude of his early life but fitted him to cope with one or other of the varied and multifarious duties of his future destiny.

But though, under the saddening influence of debility and defeat, he might count the cost of his campaigning, the martial spirit still burned within him. His connexion

with the army, it is true, had ceased at the death of Braddock, but his military duties continued as adjutant-general of the northern division of the province, and he immediately issued orders for the county lieutenants to hold the militia in readiness for parade and exercise, foreseeing that, in the present defenceless state of the frontier, there would be need of their services.

Tidings of the rout and retreat of the army had circulated far and near, and spread consternation throughout the country. Immediate incursions both of French and Indians were apprehended, and volunteer companies began to form, for the purpose of marching across the mountains to the scene of danger. It was intimated to Washington that his services would again be wanted on the frontier. He declared instantly that he was ready to serve his country to the extent of his powers, but never on the same terms as heretofore.

On the 4th of August, Governor Dinwiddie convened the Assembly to devise measures for the public safety. The sense of danger had quickened the slow patriotism of the burgesses; they no longer held back supplies; forty thousand pounds were promptly voted, and orders issued for the raising of a regiment of one thousand men.

Washington's friends urged him to present himself at Williamsburg as a candidate for the command; they were confident of his success, notwithstanding that strong interest was making for the governor's favourite, Colonel Innes.

With mingled modesty and pride, Washington declined to be a solicitor. The only terms, he said, on which he would accept a command, were a certainty as to rank and emoluments, a right to appoint his field officers, and the supply of a sufficient military chest; but to solicit the command, and, at the same time, to make stipulations, would be a little incongruous, and carry with it the face of self-sufficiency. "If," added he, "the command should be offered to me, the case will then be altered, as I should be at liberty to make such objections as reason, and my small experience, have pointed out."

While this was in agitation, he received letters from his mother, again imploring him not to risk himself in these

frontier wars. His answer was characteristic, blending the filial deference with which he was accustomed from childhood to treat her with a calm patriotism of the Roman stamp.

"Honoured Madam: If it is in my power to avoid going to the Ohio again, I shall; but if the command is pressed upon me by the general voice of the country, and offered upon such terms as cannot be objected against, it would reflect dishonour on me to refuse it; and that, I am sure, must, and ought, to give you greater uneasiness than my going in an honourable command. Upon no other terms will I accept it. At present I have no proposals made to me, nor have I any advice of such an intention, except from private hands."

On the very day that this letter was despatched, August 14, he received intelligence of his appointment to the command on the terms specified in his letters to his friends. His commission nominated him commander-in-chief of all the forces raised, or to be raised in the colony. The Assembly also voted three hundred pounds to him, and proportionate sums to the other officers, and to the privates of the Virginia companies, in consideration of their gallant conduct, and their losses in the late battle.

The officers next in command under him were Lieutenant-Colonel Adam Stephens and Major Andrew Lewis. The former, it will be recollected, had been with him in the unfortunate affair at the Great Meadows: his advance in rank shows that his conduct had been meritorious.

The appointment of Washington to his present station was the more gratifying and honourable from being a popular one, made in deference to public sentiment; to which Governor Dinwiddie was obliged to sacrifice his strong inclination in favour of Colonel Innes. It is thought that the governor never afterwards regarded Washington with a friendly eye. His conduct towards him subsequently was on various occasions cold and ungracious.[1]

It is worthy of note that the early popularity of Washington was not the result of brilliant achievements or signal success; on the contrary, it rose among trials and reverses, and may almost be said to have been the fruit of defeats.

[1] Sparks' Writings of Washington, vol. ii., p. 161, note.

It remains an honourable testimony of Virginian intelligence, that the sterling, enduring, but undazzling qualities of Washington were thus early discerned and appreciated, though only heralded by misfortunes. The admirable manner in which he had conducted himself under these misfortunes, and the sagacity and practical wisdom he had displayed on all occasions, were universally acknowledged; and it was observed that, had his modest counsels been adopted by the unfortunate Braddock, a totally different result might have attended the late campaign.

An instance of this high appreciation of his merits occurs in a sermon preached on the 17th of August by the Rev. Samuel Davis, wherein he cites him as "that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, *whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a manner for some important service to his country.*" The expressions of the worthy clergyman may have been deemed enthusiastic at the time; viewed in connection with subsequent events they appear almost prophetic.

Having held a conference with Governor Dinwiddie at Williamsburg, and received his instructions, Washington repaired, on the 14th of September, to Winchester, where he fixed his head quarters. It was a place as yet of trifling magnitude, but important from its position; being a central point where the main roads met, leading from north to south, and east to west, and commanding the channels of traffic and communication between some of the most important colonies and a great extent of frontier.

Here he was brought into frequent and cordial communication with his old friend Lord Fairfax. The stir of war had revived a spark of that military fire which animated the veteran nobleman in the days of his youth, when an officer in the cavalry regiment of the Blues. He was lord-lieutenant of the county. Greenway Court was his head-quarters. He had organized a troop of horse, which occasionally was exercised about the lawn of his domain, and he was now as prompt to mount his steed for a cavalry parade as he ever was for a fox chase. The arrival of Washington frequently brought the old nobleman to Winchester to aid the young commander with his counsels or his sword.

His services were soon put in requisition. Washington, having visited the frontier posts, established recruiting places, and taken other measures of security, had set off for Williamsburg on military business, when an express arrived at Winchester from Colonel Stephens, who commanded at Fort Cumberland, giving the alarm that a body of Indians were ravaging the country, burning the houses, and slaughtering the inhabitants. The express was instantly forwarded after Washington: in the mean time, Lord Fairfax sent out orders for the militia of Fairfax and Prince William counties to arm and hasten to the defence of Winchester, where all was confusion and affright. One fearful account followed another. The whole country beyond it was said to be at the mercy of the savages. They had blockaded the rangers in the little fortresses or outposts provided for the protection of neighbourhoods. They were advancing upon Winchester with fire, tomahawk, and scalping-knife. The country people were flocking into the town for safety—the townspeople were moving off to the settlements beyond the Blue Ridge. The beautiful valley of the Shenandoah was likely to become a scene of savage desolation.

In the height of the confusion Washington rode into the town. He had been overtaken by Colonel Stephens' express. His presence inspired some degree of confidence, and he succeeded in stopping most of the fugitives. He would have taken the field at once against the savages, believing their numbers to be few: but not more than twenty-five of the militia could be mustered for the service. The rest refused to stir—they would rather die with their wives and children.

Expresses were sent off to hurry up the militia ordered out by Lord Fairfax. Scouts were ordered out to discover the number of the foe, and convey assurances of succour to the rangers said to be blocked up in the fortresses, though Washington suspected the latter to be "more encompassed by fear than by the enemy." Smiths were set to work to furbish up and repair such fire-arms as were in the place, and waggons were sent off for musket balls, flints, and provisions.

Instead, however, of animated co-operation, Washington

was encountered by difficulties at every step. The waggons in question had to be impressed, and the waggoners compelled by force to assist. "No orders," writes he, "are obeyed, but such as a party of soldiers or my own drawn sword enforces. Without this, not a single horse, for the most earnest occasion, can be had—to such a pitch has the insolence of these people arrived, by having every point hitherto submitted to them. However, I have given up none, where his majesty's service requires the contrary, and where my proceedings are justified by my instructions; nor will I, unless they execute what they threaten—that is, blow out our brains."

One is tempted to smile at this tirade about the "insolence of the people," and this zeal for "his majesty's service," on the part of Washington; but he was as yet a young man and a young officer; loyal to his sovereign, and with high notions of military authority, which he had acquired in the camp of Braddock.

What he thus terms insolence was the dawning spirit of independence, which he was afterwards the foremost to cherish and promote; and which, in the present instance, had been provoked by the rough treatment from the military, which the waggoners and others of the yeomanry had experienced when employed in Braddock's campaign, and by the neglect to pay them for their services. Much of Washington's difficulties also arose, doubtlessly, from the inefficiency of the military laws, for an amendment of which he had in vain made repeated applications to Governor Dinwiddie.

In the mean time the panic and confusion increased. On Sunday an express hurried into town, breathless with haste and terror. The Indians, he said, were but twelve miles off; they had attacked the house of Isaac Julian; the inhabitants were flying for their lives. Washington immediately ordered the town guards to be strengthened; armed some recruits who had just arrived, and sent out two scouts to reconnoitre the enemy. It was a sleepless night in Winchester. Horror increased with the dawn; before the men could be paraded a second express arrived, ten times more terrified than the former. The Indians were within four miles of the town, killing and destroying all before

them. He had heard the constant firing of the savages and the shrieks of their victims.

The terror of Winchester now passed all bounds. Washington put himself at the head of about forty men, militia and recruits, and pushed for the scene of carnage.

The result is almost too ludicrous for record. The whole cause of the alarm proved to be three drunken troopers, carousing, hallooing, uttering the most unheard of imprecations, and ever and anon firing off their pistols. Washington interrupted them in the midst of their revel and blasphemy, and conducted them prisoners to town.

The reported attack on the house of Isaac Julian proved equally an absurd exaggeration. The ferocious party of Indians turned out to be a mulatto and a negro in quest of cattle. They had been seen by a child of Julian, who alarmed his father, who alarmed the neighbourhood.

"These circumstances," says Washington, "show what a panic prevails among the people; how much they are all alarmed at the most usual and customary cries: and yet how impossible it is to get them to act in any respect for their common safety."

They certainly present a lively picture of the feverish state of a frontier community, hourly in danger of Indian ravage and butchery; than which no kind of warfare is more fraught with real and imaginary horrors.

The alarm thus originating had spread throughout the country. A captain, who arrived with recruits from Alexandria, reported that he had found the road across the Blue Ridge obstructed by crowds of people flying for their lives, whom he endeavoured in vain to stop. They declared that Winchester was in flames!

At length the band of Indians, whose ravages had produced this consternation throughout the land, and whose numbers did not exceed one hundred and fifty, being satiated with carnage, conflagration, and plunder, retreated, bearing off spoils and captives. Intelligent scouts sent out by Washington, followed their traces, and brought back certain intelligence that they had recrossed the Allegany Mountains, and returned to their homes on the Ohio. This report allayed the public panic and restored temporary quiet to the harassed frontier.

Most of the Indians engaged in these ravages were Delawares and Shawnees, who, since Braddock's defeat, had been gained over by the French. A principal instigator was said to be Washington's old acquaintance, Shengis, and a reward was offered for his head.

Scarooyadi, successor to the half-king, remained true to the English, and vindicated his people to the Governor and Council of Pennsylvania from the charge of having had any share in the late massacres. As to the defeat at the Monongahela, "it was owing," he said, "to the pride and ignorance of that great general (Braddock) that came from England. He is now dead; but he was a bad man when he was alive. He looked upon us as dogs, and would never hear anything that was said to him. We often endeavoured to advise him, and tell him of the danger he was in with his soldiers; but he never appeared pleased with us, and that was the reason that a great many of our warriors left him."[2]

Scarooyadi was ready with his warriors to take up the hatchet again with their English brothers against the French. "Let us unite our strength," said he; "you are numerous, and all the English governors along your seashore can raise men enough; but don't let those that come from over the great seas be concerned any more. *They are unfit to fight in the woods. Let us go ourselves—we that came out of this ground.*"

No one felt more strongly than Washington the importance, at this trying juncture, of securing the assistance of these forest warriors. "It is in their power," said he, "to be of infinite use to us; and without Indians, we shall never be able to cope with these cruel foes to our country."[3]

Washington had now time to inform himself of the fate of the other enterprises included in this year's plan of military operations. We shall briefly dispose of them, for the sake of carrying on the general course of events. The history of Washington is linked with the history of the colonies. The defeat of Braddock paralyzed the expedition against Niagara. Many of General Shirley's troops, which were assembled at Albany, struck with the consternation

[2] Hazard's Register of Penn., v., p. 252, 266.

[3] Letter to Dinwiddie.

which it caused throughout the country, deserted. Most of the batteau men, who were to transport stores by various streams, returned home. It was near the end of August before Shirley was in force at Oswego. Time was lost in building boats for the lake. Storms and head winds ensued; then sickness: military incapacity in the general completed the list of impediments. Deferring the completion of the enterprise until the following year, Shirley returned to Albany with the main part of his forces in October, leaving about seven hundred men to garrison the fortifications he had commenced at Oswego.

To General William Johnson, it will be recollected, had been confided the expedition against Crown Point, on Lake Champlain. Preparations were made for it in Albany, whence the troops were to march, and the artillery, ammunition, and stores to be conveyed up the Hudson to the carrying-place between that river and Lake St. Sacrament, as it was termed by the French, but Lake George, as Johnson named it, in honour of his sovereign. At the carrying-place a fort was commenced, subsequently called Fort Edward. Part of the troops remained under General Lyman, to complete and garrison it; the main force proceeded under General Johnson to Lake George, the plan being to descend that lake to its outlet at Ticonderoga, in Lake Champlain. Having to attend the arrival of batteaux forwarded for the purpose from Albany by the carrying-place, Johnson encamped at the south end of the lake. He had with him between five and six thousand troops of New York and New England, and a host of Mohawk warriors, loyally devoted to him.

It so happened that a French force of upwards of three thousand men, under the Baron de Dieskau, an old general of high reputation, had recently arrived at Quebec, destined against Oswego. The baron had proceeded to Montreal, and sent forward thence seven hundred of his troops, when news arrived of the army gathering on Lake George for the attack on Crown Point, perhaps for an inroad into Canada. The public were in consternation; yielding to their importunities, the baron took post at Crown Point for its defence. Beside his regular troops, he had with him eight hundred Canadians, and seven hundred

Indians of different tribes. The latter were under the general command of the Chevalier Legardeur de St. Pierre, the veteran officer to whom Washington had delivered the despatches of Governor Dinwiddie on his diplomatic mission to the frontier. The chevalier was a man of great influence among the Indians.

In the mean time Johnson remained encamped at the south end of Lake George, awaiting the arrival of his batteaux. The camp was protected in the rear by the lake, in front by a bulwark of felled trees; and was flanked by thickly wooded swamps.

On the 7th of September, the Indian scouts brought word that they had discovered three large roads made through the forests toward Fort Edward. An attack on that post was apprehended. Adams, a hardy waggoner, rode express with orders to the commander to draw all the troops within the works. About midnight came other scouts. They had seen the French within four miles of the carrying-place. They had heard the report of a musket, and the voice of a man crying for mercy, supposed to be the unfortunate Adams. In the morning Colonel Williams was detached with one thousand men, and two hundred Indians, to intercept the enemy in their retreat.

Within two hours after their departure a heavy fire of musketry, in the midst of the forest, about three or four miles off, told of a warm encounter. The drums beat to arms; all were at their posts. The firing grew sharper and sharper, and nearer and nearer. The detachment under Williams was evidently retreating. Colonel Cole was sent with three hundred men to cover their retreat. The breastwork of trees was manned. Some heavy cannon were dragged up to strengthen the front. A number of men were stationed with a field-piece on an eminence on the left flank.

In a short time fugitives made their appearance; first singly, then in masses, flying in confusion, with a rattling fire behind them, and the horrible Indian war-whoop. Consternation seized upon the camp, especially when the French emerged from the forest in battle array, led by the Baron Dieskau, the gallant commander of Crown Point. Had all his troops been as daring as himself, the camp

might have been carried by assault; but the Canadians and Indians held back, posted themselves behind trees, and took to bush-fighting.

The Baron was left with his regulars (two hundred grenadiers) in front of the camp. He kept up a fire by platoons, but at too great a distance to do much mischief; the Canadians and Indians fired from their coverts. The artillery played on them in return. The camp, having recovered from its panic, opened a fire of musketry. The engagement became general. The French grenadiers stood their ground bravely for a long time, but were dreadfully cut up by the artillery and small arms. The action slackened on the part of the French, until after a long contest they gave way. Johnson's men and the Indians then leaped over the breastwork, and a chance-medley fight ensued that ended in the slaughter, rout, or capture of the enemy.

The Baron de Dieskau had been disabled by a wound in the leg. One of his men, who endeavoured to assist him, was shot down by his side. The Baron, left alone in the retreat, was found by the pursuers leaning against the stump of a tree. As they approached, he felt for his watch to insure kind treatment by delivering it up. A soldier, thinking he was drawing forth a pistol to defend himself, shot him through the hips. He was conveyed a prisoner to the camp, but ultimately died of his wounds.

The Baron had really set off from Crown Point to surprise Fort Edward, and, if successful, to push on to Albany and Schenectady; lay them in ashes, and cut off all communication with Oswego. The Canadians and Indians, however, refused to attack the fort, fearful of its cannon; he had changed his plan, therefore, and determined to surprise the camp. In the encounter with the detachment under Williams, the brave Chevalier Legardeur de St. Pierre lost his life. On the part of the Americans, Hendrick, a famous old Mohawk sachem, grand ally of General Johnson, was slain.

Johnson himself received a slight wound early in the action, and retired to his tent. He did not follow up the victory as he should have done, alleging that it was first necessary to build a strong fort at his encampment, by way of keeping up a communication with Albany, and by

the time this was completed, it would be too late to advance against Crown Point. He accordingly created a stockaded fort, which received the name of William Henry; and having garrisoned it, returned to Albany. His services, although they gained him no laurel-wreath, were rewarded, by government with five thousand pounds, and a baronetcy; and he was made Superintendent of Indian Affairs.[4]

CHAPTER XIX.

Reform in the Militia Laws—Discipline of the Troops—Dagworthy and the Question of Precedence—Washington's Journey to Boston - Style of Travelling—Conference with Shirley—The Earl of Loudoun—Military Rule for the Colonies—Washington at New York—Miss Mary Philipse.

Mortifying experience had convinced Washington of the inefficiency of the militia laws, and he now set about effecting a reformation. Through his great and persevering efforts, an act was passed in the Virginia legislature giving prompt operation to courts-martial; punishing insubordination, mutiny and desertion with adequate severity; strengthening the authority of a commander, so as to enable him to enforce order and discipline among officers as well as privates; and to avail himself, in time of emergency, and for the common safety, of the means and services of individuals.

This being effected, he proceeded to fill up his companies, and to enforce this newly-defined authority within his camp. All gaming, drinking, quarrelling, swearing, and similar excesses, were prohibited under severe penalties.

In disciplining his men, they were instructed not merely in ordinary and regular tactics, but in all the strategy of Indian warfare, and what is called "bush-fighting,"—a knowledge indispensable in the wild wars of the wilderness. Stockaded forts, too, were constructed at various points, as places of refuge and defence, in exposed neighbourhoods. Under shelter of these, the inhabitants began to return to

[4] Johnson's Letter to the Colonial Governors, Sept. 9th, 1753. London Mag., 1755, p. 544. Holmes' Am. Annals, vol. ii., p. 63. 4th edit., 1829.

their deserted homes. A shorter and better road, also, was opened by him between Winchester and Cumberland, for the transmission of reinforcements and supplies.

His exertions, however, were impeded by one of those questions of precedence, which had so often annoyed him, arising from the difference between crown and provincial commissions. Maryland having by a scanty appropriation raised a small militia force, stationed a Captain Dagworthy, with a company of thirty men, at Fort Cumberland, which stood within the boundaries of that province. Dagworthy had served in Canada in the preceding war, and had received a king's commission. This he had since commuted for half-pay, and, of course, had virtually parted with its privileges. He was nothing more, therefore, than a Maryland provincial captain, at the head of thirty men. He now, however, assumed to act under his royal commission, and refused to obey the orders of any officer, however high his rank, who merely held his commission from a governor. Nay, when Governor, or rather Colonel Innes, who commanded at the fort, was called away to North Carolina by his private affairs, the captain took upon himself the command, and insisted upon it as his right.

Parties instantly rose, and quarrels ensued among the inferior officers; grave questions were agitated between the Governors of Maryland and Virginia, as to the fort itself; the former claiming it as within his province, the latter insisting that, as it had been built according to orders sent by the king, it was a king's fort, and could not be subject to the authority of Maryland.

Washington refrained from mingling in this dispute; but intimated that if the commander-in-chief of the forces of Virginia must yield precedence to a Maryland captain of thirty men, he should have to resign his commission, as he had been compelled to do before, by a question of military rank.

So difficult was it, however, to settle these disputes of precedence, especially where the claims of two governors came in collision, that it was determined to refer the matter to Major-General Shirley, who had succeeded Braddock in the general command of the colonies. For this purpose Washington was to go to Boston, obtain a decision from

Shirley of the point in dispute, and a general regulation, by which these difficulties could be prevented in future. It was thought, also, that in a conference with the commander-in-chief he might inform himself of the military measures in contemplation.

Accordingly, on the 4th of February (1756), leaving Colonel Adam Stephens in command of the troops, Washington set out on his mission, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Captain George Mercer of Virginia, and Captain Stewart of the Virginia light horse; the officer who had taken care of General Braddock in his last moments.

In those days the conveniences of travelling, even between our main cities, were few, and the roads execrable. The party, therefore, travelled in Virginia style, on horseback, attended by their black servants in livery.[1] In this way they accomplished a journey of five hundred miles in the depth of winter; stopping for some days at Philadelphia and New York. Those cities were then comparatively small, and the arrival of a party of young Southern officers attracted attention. The late disastrous battle was still the theme of every tongue, and the honourable way in which these young officers had acquitted themselves in it, made them objects of universal interest. Washington's

[1] We have hitherto treated of Washington in his campaigns in the wilderness, frugal and scanty in his equipments, often, very probably, in little better than hunter's garb. His present excursion through some of the Atlantic cities presents him in a different aspect. His recent intercourse with young British officers had probably elevated his notions as to style in dress and appearance: at least we are inclined to suspect so from the following aristocratical order for clothes, sent shortly before the time in question, to his correspondent in London.

"2 complete livery suits for servants; with a spare cloak, and all other necessary trimmings for two suits more. I would have you choose the livery by our arms, only as the field of the arms is white, I think the clothes had better not be quite so, but nearly like the inclosed. The trimmings and facings of scarlet, and a scarlet waistcoat. If livery lace is not quite disused, I should be glad to have the cloaks laced. I like that fashion best, and two silver-laced hats for the above servants.

"1 set of horse furniture, with livery lace, with the Washington crest on the housings, &c. The cloak to be of the same piece and colour of the clothes.

"3 gold and scarlet sword-knots. 3 silver and blue do. 1 fashionable gold-laced hat."

fame, especially, had gone before him; having been spread by the officers who had served with him, and by the public honours decreed him by the Virginian legislature. "Your name," wrote his former fellow-campaigner, Gist, in a letter dated in the preceding autumn, "is more talked of in Philadelphia than that of any other person in the army, and everybody seems willing to venture under your command."

With these prepossessions in his favour, when we consider Washington's noble person and demeanour, his consummate horsemanship, the admirable horses he was accustomed to ride, and the aristocratical style of his equipments, we may imagine the effect produced by himself and his little cavalcade as they clattered through the streets of Philadelphia, and New York, and Boston. It is needless to say their sojourn in each city was a continual fête.

The mission to General Shirley was entirely successful as to the question of rank. A written order from the commander-in-chief determined that Dagworthy was entitled to the rank of a provincial captain only, and, of course, must on all occasions give precedence to Colonel Washington as a provincial field officer. The latter was disappointed, however, in the hope of getting himself and his officers put upon the regular establishment, with commissions from the king, and had to remain subjected to mortifying questions of rank and etiquette when serving in company with regular troops.

From General Shirley he learnt that the main objects of the ensuing campaign would be the reduction of Fort Niagara, so as to cut off the communication between Canada and Louisiana; the capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, as a measure of safety for New York; the besieging of Fort Duquesne, and the menacing of Quebec by a body of troops which were to advance by the Kennebec River.

The official career of General Shirley was drawing to a close. Though a man of good parts, he had always, until recently, acted in a civil capacity, and proved incompetent to conduct military operations. He was recalled to England, and was to be superseded by General Abercrombie, who was coming out with two regiments.

The general command in America, however, was to be

held by the Earl of Loudoun, who was invested with powers almost equal to those of a viceroy, being placed above all the colonial governors. These might claim to be civil and military representatives of their sovereign within their respective colonies; but, even there, were bound to defer and yield precedence to this their official superior. This was part of a plan devised long since, but now first brought into operation, by which the ministry hoped to unite the colonies under military rule, and oblige the assemblies, magistrates, and people, to furnish quarters and provide a general fund, subject to the control of this military dictator.

Beside his general command, the Earl of Loudoun was to be governor of Virginia and colonel of a royal American regiment of four battalions, to be raised in the colonies, but furnished with officers who, like himself, had seen foreign service. The campaign would open on his arrival, which, it was expected, would be early in the spring, and brilliant results were anticipated.

Washington remained ten days in Boston, attending with great interest, the meetings of the Massachusetts legislature, in which the plan of military operations was ably discussed, and receiving the most hospitable attentions from the polite and intelligent society of the place, after which he returned to New York.

Tradition gives very different motives from those of business for his two sojourns in the latter city. He found there an early friend and schoolmate, Beverly Robinson, son of John Robinson, speaker of the Virginia House of Burgesses. He was living happily and prosperously with a young and wealthy bride, having married one of the nieces and heiresses of Mr. Adolphus Philipse, a rich landholder, whose manor-house is still to be seen on the banks of the Hudson. At the house of Mr. Beverly Robinson, where Washington was an honoured guest, he met Miss Mary Philipse, sister and co-heiress of Mrs. Robinson, a young lady whose personal attractions are said to have rivalled her reputed wealth.

We have already given an instance of Washington's early sensibility to female charms. A life, however, of constant activity and care, passed for the most part in the

wilderness and on the frontier, far from female society, had left little mood or leisure for the indulgence of the tender sentiment, but made him more sensible, in the present brief interval of gay and social life, to the attractions of an elegant woman, brought up in the polite circle of New York.

That he was an open admirer of Miss Philipse is an historical fact; that he sought her hand, but was refused, is traditional, and not very probable. His military rank, his early laurels and distinguished presence, were all calculated to win favour in female eyes; but his sojourn in New York was brief; he may have been diffident in urging his suit with a lady accustomed to the homage of society and surrounded by admirers. The most probable version of the story is, that he was called away by his public duties before he had made sufficient approaches in his siege of the lady's heart to warrant a summons to surrender. In the latter part of March we find him at Williamsburg, attending the opening of the legislature of Virginia, eager to promote measures for the protection of the frontier and the capture of Fort Duquesne, the leading object of his ambition. Maryland and Pennsylvania were erecting forts for the defence of their own borders, but showed no disposition to co-operate with Virginia in the field, and artillery, artillerymen, and engineers, were wanting for an attack on fortified places. Washington urged, therefore, an augmentation of the provincial forces, and various improvements in the militia laws.

While thus engaged, he received a letter from a friend and confidant in New York, warning him to hasten back to that city before it was too late, as Captain Morris, who had been his fellow aide-de-camp under Braddock, was laying close siege to Miss Philipse. Sterner alarms, however, summoned him in another direction. Expresses from Winchester brought word that the French had made another sortie from Fort Duquesne, accompanied by bands of savages, and were spreading terror and desolation through the country. In this moment of exigency all softer claims were forgotten; Washington repaired in all haste to his post at Winchester, and Captain Morris was left to urge his suit unrivalled and carry off the prize.

CHAPTER XX.

Troubles in the Shenandoah Valley—Greenway Court and Lord Fairfax in danger—Alarms at Winchester—Washington appealed to for protection—Attacked by the Virginia Press—Honoured by the Public—Projects for Defence—Suggestions of Washington—The Gentlemen Associators—Retreat of the Savages—Expedition against Kittanning—Captain Hugh Mercer—Second Struggle through the Wilderness.

Report had not exaggerated the troubles of the frontier. It was marauded by merciless bands of savages, led, in some instances, by Frenchmen. Travellers were murdered, farmhouses burnt down, families butchered, and even stockaded forts, or houses of refuge, attacked in open day. The marauders had crossed the mountains and penetrated the valley of the Shenandoah, and several persons had fallen beneath the tomahawk in the neighbourhood of Winchester.

Washington's old friend, Lord Fairfax, found himself no longer safe in his rural abode. Greenway Court was in the midst of a woodland region, affording a covert approach for the stealthy savage. His lordship was considered a great chief, whose scalp would be an inestimable trophy for an Indian warrior. Fears were entertained, therefore, by his friends, that an attempt would be made to surprise him in his green-wood castle. His nephew, Colonel Martin, of the militia, who resided with him, suggested the expediency of a removal to the lower settlements beyond the Blue Ridge. The high-spirited old nobleman demurred; his heart cleaved to the home which he had formed for himself in the wilderness. "I am an old man," said he, "and it is of little importance whether I fall by the tomahawk or die of disease and old age; but you are young, and, it is to be hoped, have many years before you, therefore decide for us both; my only fear is, that, if we retire, the whole district will break up and take to flight; and this fine country, which I have been at such cost and trouble to improve, will again become a wilderness."

Colonel Martin took but a short time to deliberate. He knew the fearless character of his uncle, and perceived

what was his inclination. He considered that his lordship had numerous retainers, white and black, with hardy huntsmen and foresters to rally round him, and that Greenway Court was at no great distance from Winchester; he decided, therefore, that they should remain and abide the course of events.

Washington, on his arrival at Winchester, found the inhabitants in great dismay. He resolved immediately to organize a force, composed partly of troops from Fort Cumberland, partly of militia from Winchester and its vicinity, to put himself at its head, and "scour the woods and sus pected places in all the mountains and valleys of this part of the frontier, in quest of the Indians and their more cruel associates."

He accordingly despatched an express to Fort Cumberland with orders for a detachment from the garrison; "but how," said he, "are men to be raised at Winchester, since orders are no longer regarded in the county?"

Lord Fairfax, and other militia officers with whom he consulted, advised that each captain should call a private muster of his men, and read before them an address, or "exhortation" as it was called, being an appeal to their patriotism and fears, and a summons to assemble on the 15th of April to enrol themselves for the projected mountain foray.

This measure was adopted; the private musterings occurred; the exhortation was read; the time and place of assemblage appointed; but, when the day of enrolment arrived, not more than fifteen men appeared upon the ground. In the mean time the express returned with sad accounts from Fort Cumberland. No troops could be furnished from that quarter. The garrison was scarcely strong enough for self-defence, having sent out detachments in different directions. The express had narrowly escaped with his life, having been fired upon repeatedly, his horse shot under him, and his clothes riddled with bullets. The roads, he said, were infested with savages; none but hunters, who knew how to thread the forests at night, could travel with safety.

Horrors accumulated at Winchester. Every hour brought its tale of terror, true or false, of houses burnt, families

massacred, or beleaguered and famishing in stockaded forts. The danger approached. A scouting party had been attacked in the Warm Spring Mountain, about twenty miles distant, by a large body of French and Indians, mostly on horseback. The captain of the scouting party and several of his men had been slain, and the rest put to flight.

An attack on Winchester was apprehended, and the terrors of the people rose to agony. They now turned to Washington as their main hope. The women surrounded him, holding up their children, and imploring him, with tears and cries, to save them from the savages. The youthful commander looked round on the suppliant crowd with a countenance beaming with pity, and a heart wrung with anguish. A letter to Governor Dinwiddie shows the conflict of his feelings. "I am too little acquainted with pathetic language to attempt a description of these people's distresses. But what can I do? I see their situation; I know their danger, and participate their sufferings, without having it in my power to give them further relief than uncertain promises." "The supplicating tears of the women, and moving petitions of the men, melt me into such deadly sorrow, that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease."

The unstudied eloquence of this letter drew from the governor an instant order for a militia force from the upper counties to his assistance; but the Virginia newspapers, in descanting on the frontier troubles, threw discredit on the army and its officers, and attached blame to its commander. Stung to the quick by this injustice, Washington publicly declared that nothing but the imminent danger of the times prevented him from instantly resigning a command from which he could never reap either honour or benefit. His sensitiveness called forth strong letters from his friends, assuring him of the high sense entertained at the seat of government, and elsewhere, of his merits and services. "Your good health and fortune are the toast of every table," wrote his early friend, Colonel Fairfax, at that time a member of the governor's council. "Your

endeavours in the service and defence of your country must redound to your honour."

"Our hopes, dear George," wrote Mr. Robinson, the speaker of the House of Burgesses, "are all fixed on you for bringing our affairs to a happy issue. Consider what fatal consequences to your country your resigning the command at this time may be, especially as there is no doubt most of the officers will follow your example."

In fact, the situation and services of the youthful commander, shut up in a frontier town, destitute of forces, surrounded by savage foes, gallantly, though despairingly, devoting himself to the safety of a suffering people, were properly understood throughout the country, and excited a glow of enthusiasm in his favour. The legislature, too, began at length to act, but timidly and inefficiently. "The country knows her danger," writes one of the members, "but such is her parsimony, that she is willing to wait for the rains to wet the powder, and the rats to eat the bowstrings of the enemy, rather than attempt to drive them from her frontiers."

The measure of relief voted by the Assembly was an additional appropriation of twenty thousand pounds, and an increase of the provincial force to fifteen hundred men. With this it was proposed to erect and garrison a chain of frontier forts, extending through the ranges of the Allegany Mountains, from the Potomac to the borders of North Carolina, a distance of between three and four hundred miles. This was one of the inconsiderate projects devised by Governor Dinwiddie.

Washington, in letters to the governor and to the speaker of the House of Burgesses, urged the impolicy of such a plan, with their actual force and means. The forts, he observed, ought to be within fifteen or eighteen miles of each other, that their spies might be able to keep watch over the intervening country, otherwise the Indians would pass between them unperceived, effect their ravages, and escape to the mountains, swamps, and ravines before the troops from the forts could be assembled to pursue them. They ought each to be garrisoned with eighty or a hundred men, so as to afford detachments of sufficient strength, without leaving the garrison too weak; for the Indians

are the most stealthy and patient of spies and lurkers; will lie in wait for days together about small forts of the kind, and if they find, by some chance prisoner, that the garrison is actually weak, will first surprise and cut off its scouting parties, and then attack the fort itself. It was evident, therefore, observed he, that, to garrison properly such a line of forts, would require at least two thousand men. And, even then, a line of such extent might be broken through at one end before the other end could yield assistance. Feigned attacks, also, might be made at one point, while the real attack was made at another quite distant; and the country be overrun before its widely-posted defenders could be alarmed and concentrated. Then must be taken into consideration the immense cost of building so many forts, and the constant and consuming expense of supplies and transportation.

His idea of a defensive plan was to build a strong fort at Winchester, the central point, where all the main roads met, of a wide range of scattered settlements, where tidings could soonest be collected from every quarter, and whence reinforcements and supplies could most readily be forwarded. It was to be a grand deposit of military stores, a residence for commanding officers, a place of refuge for the women and children in time of alarm, when the men had suddenly to take the field; in a word, it was to be the citadel of the frontier.

Beside this, he would have three or four large fortresses erected at convenient distances upon the frontiers, with powerful garrisons, so as to be able to throw out, in constant succession, strong scouting parties to range the country. Fort Cumberland he condemned as being out of the province, and out of the track of Indian incursion; insomuch that it seldom received an alarm until all the mischief had been effected.

His representations with respect to military laws and regulations were equally cogent. In the late act of the Assembly for raising a regiment, it was provided that, in cases of emergency, if recruits should not offer in sufficient number, the militia might be drafted to supply the deficiencies, but only to serve until December, and not to be marched out of the province. In this case, said he, before

they have entered upon service, or got the least smattering of duty, they will claim their discharge; if they are pursuing an enemy who has committed the most unheard-of cruelties, he has only to step across the Potomac and he is safe. Then as to the limits of service, they might just as easily have been enlisted for seventeen months as seven. They would then have been seasoned as well as disciplined; "for we find by experience," says he, "that our poor ragged soldiers would kill the most active militia in five days' marching."

Then, as to punishments: death, it was true, had been decreed for mutiny and desertion; but there was no punishment for cowardice, for holding correspondence with the enemy, for quitting or sleeping on one's post—all capital offences, according to the military codes of Europe. Neither were there provisions for quartering or billeting solders, or impressing waggons and other conveyances, in times of exigency. To crown all, no court-martial could sit out of Virginia—a most embarrassing regulation when troops were fifty or a hundred miles beyond the frontier. He earnestly suggested amendments on all these points, as well as with regard to the soldiers' pay, which was less than that of the regular troops or the troops of most of the other provinces.

All these suggestions, showing, at this youthful age, that forethought and circumspection which distinguished him throughout life, were repeatedly and eloquently urged upon Governor Dinwiddie with very little effect. The plan of a frontier line with twenty-three forts was persisted in. Fort Cumberland was pertinaciously kept up at a great and useless expense of men and money, and the militia laws remained lax and inefficient. It was decreed, however, that the great central fort at Winchester, recommended by Washington, should be erected.

In the height of the alarm a company of one hundred gentlemen, mounted and equipped, volunteered their services to repair to the frontier. They were headed by Peyton Randolph, attorney-general, a man deservedly popular throughout the province. Their offer was gladly accepted. They were denominated the "Gentlemen Associators," and great expectations, of course, were enter-

tained from their gallantry and devotion. They were empowered, also, to aid with their judgment in the selection of places for frontier forts.

The "Gentlemen Associators," like all gentlemen associators in similar emergencies, turned out with great zeal and spirit, and immense popular effect, but wasted their fire in preparation and on the march. Washington, who well understood the value of such aid, observed dryly in a letter to Governor Dinwiddie, "I am heartily glad that you have fixed upon these gentlemen to point out the places for erecting forts, but regret to find their motions so slow." There is no doubt that they would have conducted themselves gallantly had they been put to the test, but before they arrived near the scene of danger the alarm was over. About the beginning of May, scouts brought in word that the tracks of the marauding savages tended toward Fort Duquesne, as if on the return. In a little while it was ascertained that they had recrossed the Allegany Mountain to the Ohio, in such numbers as to leave a beaten track equal to that made in the preceding year by the army of Braddock.

The repeated inroads of the savages called for an effectual and permanent check. The idea of being constantly subject to the irruptions of a deadly foe, that moved with stealth and mystery, and was only to be traced by its ravages, and counted by its footprints, discouraged all settlement of the country. The beautiful valley of the Shenandoah was fast becoming a deserted and a silent place. Her people, for the most part, had fled to the older settlements south of the mountains, and the Blue Ridge was likely soon to become virtually the frontier line of the province.

We have to record one signal act of retaliation on the perfidious tribes of the Ohio, in which a person whose name subsequently became dear to Americans was concerned. Prisoners who had escaped from the savages reported that Shingis, Washington's faithless ally, and another sachem, called Captain Jacobs, were the two heads of the hostile bands that had desolated the frontier. That they lived at Kittanning, an Indian town, about twenty miles above Fort Duquesne; at which their warriors were

fitted out for incursions, and whither they returned with their prisoners and plunder. Captain Jacobs was a daring fellow, and scoffed at palisadoed forts. "He could take any fort," he said, "that would catch fire."

A party of two hundred and eighty provincials, resolute men, undertook to surprise and destroy this savage nest. It was commanded by Colonel John Armstrong; and with him went Dr., now Captain Hugh Mercer, eager to revenge the savage atrocities of which he had been a witness at the defeat of Braddock.

Armstrong led his men rapidly, but secretly, over mountain and through forest, until, after a long and perilous march, they reached the Ohio. It was a moonlight night when they arrived in the neighbourhood of Kittanning. They were guided to the village by whoops and yells, and the sound of the Indian drum. The warriors were celebrating their exploits by the triumphant scalp-dance. After a while the revel ceased, and a number of fires appeared here and there in a corn-field. They were made by such of the Indians as slept in the open air, and were intended to drive off the gnats. Armstrong and his men lay down "quiet and hush," observing everything narrowly, and waiting until the moon should set, and the warriors be asleep. At length the moon went down, the fires burned low, all was quiet. Armstrong now roused his men, some of whom, wearied by their long march, had fallen asleep. He divided his forces; part were to attack the warriors in the corn-field, part were despatched to the houses, which were dimly seen by the first streak of day. There was sharp firing in both quarters, for the Indians, though taken by surprise, fought bravely, inspired by the war-whoop of their chief, Captain Jacobs. The women and children fled to the woods. Several of the provincials were killed and wounded. Captain Hugh Mercer received a wound in the arm, and was taken to the top of a hill. The fierce chieftain, Captain Jacobs, was besieged in his house, which had port holes, whence he and his warriors made havoc among his assailants. The adjoining houses were set on fire. The chief was summoned to surrender himself. He replied he was a man, and would not be a prisoner. He was told he would be burnt. His reply was, "he would kill four or

five before he died." The flames and smoke approached. "One of the besieged warriors, to show his manhood, began to sing. A squaw at the same time was heard to cry, but was severely rebuked by the men."[1]

In the end, the warriors were driven out by the flames; some escaped, and some were shot. Among the latter was Captain Jacobs, and his gigantic son, said to be seven feet high. Fire was now set to all the houses, thirty in number. "During the burning of the houses," says Colonel Armstrong, "we were agreeably entertained with a quick succession of charged guns, gradually firing off as reached by the fire, but much more so with the vast explosion of sundry bags and large kegs of powder, wherewith almost every house abounded." The colonel was in a strange condition to enjoy such an entertainment, having received a wound from a large musket-ball in the shoulder.

The object of the expedition was accomplished. Thirty or forty of the warriors were slain, their stronghold was a smoking ruin. There was danger of the victors being cut off by a detachment from Fort Duquesne. They made the best of their way, therefore, to their horses, which had been left at a distance, and set off rapidly on their march homewards.

Captain Hugh Mercer was again left behind wounded. He had another long, solitary, and painful struggle through the wilderness, and again reached Fort Cumberland sick, weary, and half famished. Heaven reserved him to illustrate a more distinguished page in American history.[2]

CHAPTER XXI.

Founding of Fort Loudoun—Washington's Tour of Inspection—Inefficiency of the Militia System—Gentlemen Soldiers—Cross-Purposes with Dinwiddie—Military Affairs in the North—Delays of Lord Loudoun—Activity of Montcalm—Loudoun in Winter Quarters.

THROUGHOUT the summer of 1756, Washington exerted himself diligently in carrying out measures determined upon for frontier security. The great fortress at Winchester was

[1] Letter from Col. Armstrong. [2] Colonial Register, vii., 257.

commenced, and the work urged forward as expeditiously as the delays and perplexities incident to a badly-organized service would permit. It received the name of Fort Loudoun, in honour of the commander-in-chief, whose arrival in Virginia was hopefully anticipated.

As to the sites of the frontier posts, they were decided upon by Washington and his officers, after frequent and long consultations; parties were sent out to work on them, and men recruited, and militia drafted, to garrison them. Washington visited occasionally such as were in progress and near at hand. It was a service of some peril, for the mountains and forests were still infested by prowling savages, especially in the neighbourhood of these new forts. At one time when he was reconnoitring a wild part of the country, attended merely by a servant and a guide, two men were murdered by the Indians in a solitary defile shortly after he had passed through it.

In the autumn he made a tour of inspection along the whole line, accompanied by his friend, Captain Hugh Mercer, who had recovered from his recent wounds. This tour furnished repeated proofs of the inefficiency of the militia system. In one place he attempted to raise a force with which to scour a region infested by roving bands of savages. After waiting several days, but five men answered to his summons. In another place, where three companies had been ordered to the relief of a fort, attacked by the Indians, all that could be mustered were a captain, a lieutenant, and seven or eight men.

When the militia were drafted, and appeared under arms, the case was not much better. It was now late in the autumn; their term of service, by the act of the legislature, expired in December,—half of the time, therefore, was lost in marching out and home. Their waste of provisions was enormous. To be put on allowance, like other soldiers, they considered an indignity. They would sooner starve than carry a few days' provisions on their backs. On the march, when breakfast was wanted, they would knock down the first beeve they met with, and, after regaling themselves, march on till dinner, when they would take the same method; and so for supper, to the great oppression of the people. For the want of proper military laws

they were obstinate, self-willed, and perverse. Every individual had his own crude notion of things, and would undertake to direct. If his advice were neglected he would think himself slighted, abused, and injured, and to redress himself would depart for his home.

The garrisons were weak for want of men, but more so from indolence and irregularity. None were in a posture of defence, few but might be surprised with the greatest ease. At one fort the Indians rushed from their lurking place, pounced upon several children playing under the walls, and bore them off before they were discovered. Another fort was surprised, and many of the people massacred in the same manner. In the course of his tour, as he and his party approached a fort, he heard a quick firing for several minutes; concluding that it was attacked, they hastened to its relief, but found the garrison were merely amusing themselves firing at a mark, or for wagers. In this way they would waste their ammunition as freely as they did their provisions. In the mean time the inhabitants of the country were in a wretched situation, feeling the little dependence to be put on militia, who were slow in coming to their assistance, indifferent about their preservation, unwilling to continue, and regardless of everything but of their own ease. In short they were so apprehensive of approaching ruin, that the whole back country was in a general motion towards the southern colonies.

From the Catawba, he was escorted along a range of forts by a colonel, and about thirty men, chiefly officers. "With this small company of irregulars," says he, "with whom order, regularity, circumspection, and vigilance were matters of derision and contempt, we set out, and, by the protection of Providence, reached Augusta court-house in seven days, without meeting the enemy; otherwise, we must have fallen a sacrifice, through the indiscretion of these whooping, hallooing, *gentlemen* soldiers!"

How lively a picture does this give of the militia system at all times, when not subjected to strict military law!

What rendered this year's service peculiarly irksome and embarrassing to Washington, was the nature of his correspondence with Governor Dinwiddie. That gentleman, either from the natural hurry and confusion of his mind,

or from a real disposition to perplex, was extremely ambiguous and unsatisfactory in most of his orders and replies. "So much am I kept in the dark," says Washington, in one of his letters, "that I do not know whether to prepare for the offensive or defensive. What would be absolutely necessary for the one, would be quite useless for the other." And again: "The orders I receive are full of ambiguity. I am left like a wanderer in the wilderness, to proceed at hazard. I am answerable for consequences, and blamed, without the privilege of defence."

In nothing was this disposition to perplex more apparent than in the governor's replies respecting Fort Cumberland. Washington had repeatedly urged the abandonment of this fort as a place of frontier deposit, being within the bounds of another province, and out of the track of Indian incursion; so that often the alarm would not reach there until after the mischief had been effected. He applied, at length, for particular and positive directions from the governor on this head. "The following," says he, "is an exact copy of his answer:—'Fort Cumberland is a *king's* fort, and built chiefly at the charge of the colony, therefore properly under our direction until a new governor is appointed.' Now, whether I am to understand this ay or no to the plain simple question asked, Is the fort to be continued or removed? I know not. But in all important matters I am directed in this ambiguous and uncertain way."

Governor Dinwiddie subsequently made himself explicit on this point. Taking offence at some of Washington's comments on the military affairs of the frontier, he made the stand of a self-willed and obstinate man, in the case of Fort Cumberland; and represented it in such light to Lord Loudoun, as to draw from his lordship an order that it should be kept up: and an implied censure of the conduct of Washington in slighting a post of such paramount importance. "I cannot agree with Colonel Washington," writes his lordship, "in not drawing in the posts from the stockade forts, in order to defend that advanced one; and I should imagine much more of the frontier will be exposed by retiring your advanced posts near Winchester, where I understand he is retired; for, from your letter, I take it for granted he has before this executed his plan,

without waiting for any advice. If he leaves any of the great quantity of stores behind, it will be very unfortunate, and he ought to consider that it must lie at his own door."

Thus powerfully supported, Dinwiddie went so far as to order that the garrisons should be withdrawn from the stockades and small frontier forts, and most of the troops from Winchester, to strengthen Fort Cumberland, which was now to become head-quarters; thus weakening the most important points and places, to concentrate a force where it was not wanted, and would be out of the way in most cases of alarm. By these meddlesome moves, made by Governor Dinwiddie from a distance, without knowing anything of the game, all previous arangements were reversed, every thing was thrown into confusion, and enormous losses and expenses were incurred.

"Whence it arises, or why, I am truly ignorant," writes Washington to Mr. Speaker Robinson, "but my strongest representations of matters relative to the frontiers are disregarded as idle and frivolous; my propositions and measures as partial and selfish; and all my sincerest endeavours for the service of my country are perverted to the worst purposes. My orders are dark and uncertain; to-day approved, to-morrow disappoved."

Whence all this contradiction and embarrassment arose has since been explained, and with apparent reason. Governor Dinwiddie had never recovered from the pique caused by the popular elevation of Washington to the command in preference to his favourite, Colonel Innes. His irritation was kept alive by a little Scottish faction, who were desirous of disgusting Washington with the service, so as to induce him to resign and make way for his rival. They might have carried their point during the panic at Winchester, had not his patriotism and his sympathy with the public distress been more powerful than his self-love. He determined, he said, to bear up under these embarrassments in the hope of better regulations when Lord Loudoun should arrive, to whom he looked for the future fate of Virginia.

While these events were occurring on the Virginia frontier, military affairs went on tardily and heavily at the north. The campaign against Canada, which was to

have opened early in the year, hung fire. The armament coming out for the purpose, under Lord Loudoun, was delayed through the want of energy and union in the British cabinet. General Abercrombie, who was to be next in command to his lordship, and to succeed to General Shirley, set sail in advance for New York with two regiments, but did not reach Albany, the head-quarters of military operation, until the 25th of June. He billeted his soldiers upon the town, much to the disgust of the inhabitants, and talked of ditching and stockading it, but postponed all exterior enterprises until the arrival of Lord Loudoun; then the campaign was to open in earnest.

On the 12th of July came word that the forts Ontario and Oswego, on each side of the mouth of the Oswego River, were menaced by the French. They had been imperfectly constructed by Shirley, and were insufficiently garrisoned, yet contained a great amount of military and naval stores, and protected the vessels which cruised on Lake Ontario.

Major-general Webb was ordered by Abercrombie to hold himself in readiness to march with one regiment to the relief of these forts, but received no further orders. Everything awaited the arrival at Albany of Lord Loudoun, which at length took place on the 29th of July. There were now at least ten thousand troops, regulars and provincials, loitering in an idle camp at Albany, yet relief to Oswego was still delayed. Lord Loudoun was in favour of it, but the governments of New York and New England urged the immediate reduction of Crown Point as necessary for the security of their frontier. After much debate, it was agreed that General Webb should march to the relief of Oswego. He left Albany on the 12th of August, but had scarce reached the carrying-place, between the Mohawk River and Wood Creek, when he received news that Oswego was reduced and its garrison captured. While the British commanders had debated, Field-marshal the Marquis De Montcalm, newly arrived from France, had acted. He was a different kind of soldier from Abercrombie or Loudoun. A capacious mind and enterprising spirit animated a small, but active and untiring

frame. Quick in thought, quick in speech, quicker still in action, he comprehended everything at a glance, and moved from point to point of the province with a celerity and secrecy that completely baffled his slow and pondering antagonists. Crown Point and Ticonderoga were visited, and steps taken to strengthen their works and provide for their security; then hastening to Montreal, he put himself at the head of a force of regulars, Canadians, and Indians; ascended the St. Lawrence to Lake Ontario; blocked up the mouth of the Onondaga by his vessels, landed his guns, and besieged the two forts; drove the garrison out of one into the other, killed the commander, Colonel Mercer, and compelled the garrisons to surrender prisoners of war. With the forts was taken an immense amount of military stores, ammunition, and provisions; one hundred and twenty-one cannon, fourteen mortars, six vessels of war, a vast number of batteaux, and three chests of money. His blow achieved, Montcalm returned in triumph to Montreal, and sent the colours of the captured forts to be hung up as trophies in the Canadian churches.

The season was now too far advanced for Lord Loudoun to enter upon any great military enterprise; he postponed, therefore, the great Northern campaign, so much talked of and debated, until the following year, and having taken measures for the protection of his frontiers, and for more active operations in the spring, returned to New York, hung up his sword, and went into comfortable winter quarters.

CHAPTER XXII.

Washington vindicates his conduct to Lord Loudoun—His reception by his Lordship—Military Plans—Lord Loudoun at Halifax—Montcalm on Lake George—His Triumphs—Lord Loudoun's Failures—Washington at Winchester—Continued Misunderstandings with Dinwiddie—Return to Mount Vernon.

Circumstances had led Washington to think that Lord Loudoun "had received impressions to his prejudice by false representations of facts," and that a wrong idea prevailed at head-quarters respecting the state of military affairs in Virginia. He was anxious, therefore, for an

opportunity of placing all these matters in a proper light; and, understanding that there was to be a meeting in Philadelphia, in the month of March, between Lord Loudoun and the southern governors, to consult about measures of defence for their respective provinces, he wrote to Governor Dinwiddie for permission to attend it.

"I cannot conceive," writes Dinwiddie, in reply, "what service you can be of in going there, as the plan concerted will, in course, be communicated to you and the other officers. However, as you seem so earnest to go, I now give you leave."

This ungracious reply seemed to warrant the suspicions entertained by some of Washington's friends, that it was the busy pen of Governor Dinwiddie which had given the "false representation of facts" to Lord Loudoun. About a month, therefore, before the time of the meeting, Washington addressed a long letter to his lordship, explanatory of military affairs in the quarter where he had commanded. In this he set forth the various defects in the militia laws of Virginia, the errors in its system of defence, and the inevitable confusion which had thence resulted.

Adverting to his own conduct: "The orders I receive," said he, "are full of ambiguity. I am left like a wanderer in the wilderness to proceed at hazard. I am answerable for consequences, and blamed, without the privilege of defence. * * * It is not to be wondered at if, under such peculiar circumstances, I should be sick of a service which promises so little of a soldier's reward.

"I have long been satisfied of the impossibility of continuing in this service without loss of honour. Indeed, I was fully convinced of it before I accepted the command the second time, seeing the cloudy prospect before me; and I did, for this reason, reject the offer, until I was ashamed any longer to refuse, not caring to expose my character to public censure. The solicitations of the country overcame my objections and induced me to accept it. Another reason has of late operated to continue me in the service until now, and that is, the dawn of hope that arose when I heard your lordship was destined, by his Majesty, for the important command of his armies in America, and appointed to the government of his dominion

of Virginia. Hence it was that I drew my hopes, and fondly pronounced your lordship our patron. Although I have not the honour to be known to your lordship, yet your name was familiar to my ear on account of the important services rendered to his Majesty in other parts of the world."

The manner in which Washington was received by Lord Loudoun, on arriving in Philadelphia, showed him at once that his long explanatory letter had produced the desired effect, and that his character and conduct were justly appreciated. During his sojourn in Philadelphia, he was frequently consulted on points of frontier service, and his advice was generally adopted. On one point it failed. He advised that an attack should be made on Fort Duquesne, simultaneous with the attempts on Canada. At such time a great part of the garrison would be drawn away to aid in the defence of that province, and a blow might be struck more likely to insure the peace and safety of the southern frontier than all its forts and defences.

Lord Loudoun, however, was not to be convinced, or at least persuaded. According to his plan, the middle and southern provinces were to maintain a merely defensive warfare; and as Virginia would be required to send four hundred of her troops to the aid of South Carolina, she would, in fact, be left weaker than before.

Washington was also disappointed a second time in the hope of having his regiment placed on the same footing as the regular army, and of obtaining a king's commission; the latter he was destined never to hold.

His representations with respect to Fort Cumberland had the desired effect in counteracting the mischievous intermeddling of Dinwiddie. The Virginia troops and stores were ordered to be again removed to Fort Loudoun, at Winchester, which once more became head-quarters, while Fort Cumberland was left to be occupied by a Maryland garrison. Washington was instructed, likewise, to correspond and co-operate, in military affairs, with Colonel Stanwix, who was stationed on the Pennsylvania frontier, with five hundred men from the Royal American regiment, and to whom he would be, in some measure subordinate. This proved a correspondence of friendship, as

well as duty; Colonel Stanwix being a gentleman of high moral worth, as well as great ability in military affairs.

The great plan of operations at the north was again doomed to failure. The reduction of Crown Point, on Lake Champlain, which had long been meditated, was laid aside, and the capture of Louisburg substituted, as an acquisition of far greater importance. This was a place of great consequence, situated on the isle of Cape Breton, and strongly fortified. It commanded the fisheries of Newfoundland, overawed New England, and was a main bulwark to Acadia.

In the course of July, Lord Loudoun set sail for Halifax with all the troops he could collect, amounting to about six thousand men, to join with Admiral Holbourne, who had just arrived at that port with eleven ships of the line, a fire-ship, bomb-ketch, and fleet of transports, having on board six thousand men. With this united force Lord Loudoun anticipated the certain capture of Louisburg.

Scarce had the tidings of his Lordship's departure reached Canada, than the active Montcalm again took the field, to follow up the successes of the preceding year. Fort William Henry, which Sir Wm. Johnson had erected on the southern shore of Lake George, was now his object; it commanded the lake, and was an important protection to the British frontier. A brave old officer, Colonel Monro, with about five hundred men, formed the garrison; more than three times that number of militia were intrenched near by. Montcalm had, early in the season, made three ineffectual attempts upon the fort, he now trusted to be more successful. Collecting his forces from Crown Point, Ticonderoga, and the adjacent ports, with a considerable number of Canadians and Indians, altogether nearly eight thousand men, he advanced up the lake, on the 1st of August, in a fleet of boats with swarms of Indian canoes in the advance. The fort came near being surprised; but the troops encamped without it, abandoned their tents and hurried within the works. A summons to surrender was answered by a brave defiance. Montcalm invested the fort, made his approaches, and battered it with his artillery. For five days its veteran commander kept up a vigorous defence, trusting to receive assistance from Gene-

ral Webb, who had failed to relieve Fort Oswego in the preceding year, and who was now at Fort Edward, about fifteen miles distant, with upwards of five thousand men. Instead of this, Webb, who overrated the French forces, sent him a letter, advising him to capitulate. The letter was intercepted by Montcalm, but still forwarded to Monro. The obstinate old soldier, however, persisted in his defence, until most of his cannon were burst, and his ammunition expended. At length, in the month of August, he hung out a flag of truce, and obtained honourable terms from an enemy who knew how to appreciate his valour. Montcalm demolished the fort, carried off all the artillery, and munitions of war, with vessels employed in the navigation of the lake; and having thus completed his destruction of the British defences on this frontier, returned once more in triumph with the spoils of victory, to hang up fresh trophies in the churches of Canada.

Lord Loudoun, in the mean time, formed his junction with Admiral Holbourne at Halifax, and the troops were embarked with all diligence on board of the transports. Unfortunately, the French were again too quick for them. Admiral de Bois de la Mothe had arrived at Louisburg, with a large naval and land force; it was ascertained that he had seventeen ships of the line, and three frigates, quietly moored in the harbour; that the place was well fortified and supplied with provisions and ammunition, and garrisoned with six thousand regular troops, three thousand natives, and thirteen hundred Indians.

Some hotheads would have urged an attempt against all such array of force, but Lord Loudoun was aware of the probability of defeat, and the disgrace and ruin that it would bring upon British arms in America. He wisely, though ingloriously, returned to New York. Admiral Holbourne made a silly demonstration of his fleet off the harbour of Louisburg, approaching within two miles of the batteries, but retired on seeing the French Admiral preparing to unmoor. He afterwards returned with a reinforcement of four ships of the line; cruised before Louisburg, endeavouring to draw the enemy to an engagement, which De la Mothe had the wisdom to decline; was overtaken by a hurricane, in which one of his ships was lost,

eleven were dismasted, others had to throw their guns overboard, and all returned in a shattered condition to England. Thus ended the northern campaign by land and sea, a subject of great mortification to the nation, and ridicule and triumph to the enemy.

During these unfortunate operations to the north, Washington was stationed at Winchester, shorn of part of his force by the detachment to South Carolina, and left with seven hundred men to defend a frontier of more than three hundred and fifty miles in extent. The capture and demolition of Oswego by Montcalm had produced a disastrous effect. The whole country of the five nations was abandoned to the French. The frontiers of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia were harassed by repeated inroads of French and Indians, and Washington had the mortification to see the noble valley of the Shenandoah almost deserted by its inhabitants, and fast relapsing into a wilderness.

The year wore away on his part in the harassing service of defending a wide frontier with an insufficient and badly organized force, and the vexations he experienced were heightened by continual misunderstandings with Governor Dinwiddie. From the ungracious tenor of several of that gentleman's letters, and from private information, he was led to believe that some secret enemy had been making false representations of his motives and conduct, and prejudicing the governor against him. He vindicated himself warmly from the alleged aspersions, proudly appealing to the whole course of his public career in proof of their falsity. "It is uncertain," said he, "in what light my services may have appeared to your honour; but this I know, and it is the highest consolation I am capable of feeling, that no man that ever was employed in a public capacity has endeavoured to discharge the trust reposed in him with greater honesty and more zeal for the country's interest than I have done; and if there is any person living who can say, with justice, that I have offered any intentional wrong to the public, I will cheerfully submit to the most ignominious punishment that an injured people ought to inflict. On the other hand it is hard to have my character arraigned, and my actions condemned, without a hearing."

His magnanimous appeal had but little effect. Dinwiddie was evidently actuated by the petty pique of a narrow and illiberal mind, impatient of contradiction, even when in error. He took advantage of his official station to vent his spleen and gratify his petulance in a variety of ways incompatible with the courtesy of a gentleman. It may excite a grave smile at the present day to find Washington charged by this very small-minded man with looseness in his way of writing to him; with remissness in his duty towards him; and even with impertinence in the able and eloquent representations which he felt compelled to make of disastrous mismanagement in military affairs; and still more to find his reasonable request, after a long course of severe duty, for a temporary leave of absence to attend to his private concerns, peremptorily refused, and that with as little courtesy as though he were a mere subaltern seeking to absent himself on a party of pleasure.

The multiplied vexations which Washington had latterly experienced from this man, had preyed upon his spirits, and contributed, with his incessant toils and anxieties, to undermine his health. For some time he struggled with repeated attacks of dysentery and fever, and continued in the exercise of his duties; but the increased violence of his malady, and the urgent advice of his friend Dr. Craik, the army surgeon, induced him to relinquish his post towards the end of the year and retire to Mount Vernon.

The administration of Dinwiddie, however, was now at an end. He set sail for England in January, 1758, very little regretted, excepting by his immediate hangers-on, and leaving a character overshadowed by the imputation of avarice and extortion in the exaction of illegal fees, and of downright delinquency in regard to large sums transmitted to him by government to be paid over to the province in indemnification of its extra expenses; for the disposition of which sums he failed to render an account.

He was evidently a sordid, narrow-minded, and somewhat arrogant man; bustling rather than active; prone to meddle with matters of which he was profoundly ignorant, and absurdly unwilling to have his ignorance enlightened.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Washington recovers his Health—Again in Command at Fort Loudoun—Administration of Pitt—Loudoun succeeded by General Abercrombie—Military Arrangements—Washington Commander-in-Chief of the Virginia Forces—Amherst against Louisburg—General Wolfe—Montgomery—Capture of Louisburg—Abercrombie on Lake George—Death of Lord Howe—Repulse of Abercrombie—Success of Bradstreet at Oswego.

For several months Washington was afflicted by returns of his malady, accompanied by symptoms indicative as he thought of a decline. "My constitution," writes he to his friend Colonel Stanwix, "is much impaired, and nothing can retrieve it but the greatest care and the most circumspect course of life. This being the case, as I have now no prospect left of preferment in the military way, and despair of rendering that immediate service which my country may require from the person commanding its troops, I have thoughts of quitting my command and retiring from all public business, leaving my post to be filled by some other person more capable of the task, and who may, perhaps, have his endeavours crowned with better success than mine have been."

A gradual improvement in his health, and a change in his prospects, encouraged him to continue in what really was his favourite career, and at the beginning of April he was again in command at Fort Loudoun. Mr. Francis Fauquier had been appointed successor to Dinwiddie, and, until he should arrive, Mr. John Blair, president of the council, had, from his office, charge of the government. In the latter Washington had a friend who appreciated his character and services, and was disposed to carry out his plans.

The general aspect of affairs, also, was more animating. Under the able and intrepid administration of William Pitt, who had control of the British cabinet, an effort was made to retrieve the disgraces of the late American campaign, and to carry on the war with greater vigour. The instructions for a common fund were discontinued; there was no more talk of taxation by Parliament. Lord Loudoun, from whom so much had been anticipated, had

disappointed by his inactivity, and been relieved from a command in which he had attempted much and done so little. His friends alleged that his inactivity was owing to a want of unanimity and co-operation in the colonial governments, which paralyzed all his well-meant efforts. Franklin, it is probable, probed the matter with his usual sagacity when he characterized him as a man "entirely made up of indecision."—"Like St. George on the signs, he was always on horseback, but never rode on."

On the return of his lordship to England, the general command in America devolved on Major-general Abercrombie, and the forces were divided into three detached bodies; one, under Major-general Amherst, was to operate in the north with the fleet under Boscawen, for the reduction of Louisburg and the island of Cape Breton; another, under Abercrombie himself, was to proceed against Ticonderoga and Crown Point on Lake Champlain; and the third, under Brigadier-general Forbes, who had the charge of the middle and southern colonies, was to undertake the reduction of Fort Duquesne. The colonial troops were to be supplied, like the regulars, with arms, ammunition, tents and provisions, at the expense of government, but clothed and paid by the colonies; for which the king would recommend to Parliament a proper compensation. The provincial officers appointed by the governors, and of no higher rank than colonel, were to be equal in command, when united in service, with those who held direct from the king, according to the date of their commissions. By these wise provisions of Mr. Pitt, a fertile cause of heartburnings and dissensions was removed.

It was with the greatest satisfaction Washington saw his favourite measure at last adopted, the reduction of Fort Duquesne; and he resolved to continue in the service until that object was accomplished. In a letter to Stanwix, who was now a brigadier-general, he modestly requested to be mentioned in favourable terms to General Forbes, "not," said he, "as a person who would depend upon him for further recommendation to military preferment (for I have long conquered all such inclinations, and shall serve this campaign merely for the purpose of affording my best endeavours to bring matters to a conclusion), but as a

person who would gladly be distinguished in some measure from the *common run* of provincial officers, as I understand there will be a motley herd of us." He had the satisfaction subsequently of enjoying the fullest confidence of General Forbes, who knew too well the sound judgment and practical ability evinced by him in the unfortunate campaign of Braddock not to be desirous of availing himself of his counsels.

Washington still was commander-in-chief of the Virginia troops, now augmented, by an act of the Assembly, to two regiments of one thousand men each; one led by himself, the other by Colonel Byrd; the whole destined to make a part of the army of General Forbes in the expedition against Fort Duquesne.

Of the animation which he felt at the prospect of serving in this long-desired campaign, and revisiting with an effective force the scene of past disasters, we have a proof in a short letter, written during the excitement of the moment, to Major Francis Halket, his former companion in arms.

"My dear Halket:—Are we to have you once more among us? And shall we revisit together a hapless spot, that proved so fatal to many of our former brave companions? Yes; and I rejoice at it, hoping it will now be in our power to testify a just abhorrence of the cruel butcheries exercised on our friends in the unfortunate day of General Braddock's defeat; and, moreover to show our enemies that we can practise all that lenity of which they only boast, without affording any adequate proof."

Before we proceed to narrate the expedition against Fort Duquesne, however, we will briefly notice the conduct of the two other expeditions, which formed important parts in the plan of military operations for the year. And first, of that against Louisburg and the Island of Cape Breton.

Major-general Amherst, who conducted this expedition, embarked with between ten and twelve thousand men, in the fleet of Admiral Boscawen, and set sail about the end of May from Halifax, in Nova Scotia. Along with him went Brigadier-general James Wolfe, an officer young in years, but a veteran in military experience, and destined to gain an almost romantic celebrity. He may almost be

said to have been born in the camp, for he was the son of Major-general Wolfe, a veteran officer of merit, and when a lad had witnessed the battles of Dettingen and Fontenoy. While a mere youth he had distinguished himself at the battle of Laffeldt, in the Netherlands; and now, after having been eighteen years in the service, he was but thirty-one years of age. In America, however, he was to win his lasting laurels.

On the 2nd of June the fleet arrived at the Bay of Gabarus, about seven miles to the west of Louisburg. The latter place was garrisoned by two thousand five hundred regulars and three hundred militia, and subsequently reinforced by upwards of four hundred Canadians and Indians. In the harbour were six ships-of-the-line and five frigates, three of which were sunk across the mouth. For several days the troops were prevented from landing by boisterous weather and a heavy surf. The French improved that time to strengthen a chain of forts along the shore, deepening trenches, and constructing batteries.

On the 8th of June preparations for landing were made before daybreak. The troops were embarked in boats in three divisions, under Brigadiers Wolfe, Whetmore, and Laurens. The landing was to be attempted west of the harbour, at a place feebly secured. Several frigates and sloops previously scoured the beach with their shot, after which Wolfe pulled for shore with his division, the other two divisions distracting the attention of the enemy by making a show of landing in other parts. The surf still ran high; the enemy opened a fire of cannon and musketry from their batteries; many boats were upset; many men slain; but Wolfe pushed forward, sprang into the water when the boats grounded, dashed through the surf with his men, stormed the enemy's breastworks and batteries, and drove them from the shore. Among the subalterns who stood by Wolfe on this occasion was an Irish youth, twenty-one years of age, named Richard Montgomery, whom, for his gallantry, Wolfe promoted to a lieutenancy, and who was destined, in after years, to gain an imperishable renown. The other divisions effected a landing after a severe conflict; artillery and stores were brought on shore, and Louisburg was formally invested.

The weather continued boisterous; the heavy cannon, and the various munitions necessary for a siege, were landed with difficulty. Amherst, moreover, was a cautious man, and made his approaches slowly, securing his camp by redoubts and epaulements. The Chevalier Drucour, who commanded at Louisburg, called in his outposts, and prepared for a desperate defence, keeping up a heavy fire from his batteries, and from the ships in the harbour.

Wolfe, with a strong detachment, surprised at night, and took possession of, Light House Point, on the north-east side of the entrance to the harbour. Here he threw up batteries in addition to those already there, from which he was enabled greatly to annoy both town and shipping, as well as to aid Amherst in his slow but regular and sure approaches.

On the 21st of July the three largest of the enemy's ships were set on fire by a bombshell. On the night of the 25th two other of the ships were boarded, sword in hand, from boats of the squadron; one being aground, was burnt, the other was towed out of the harbour in triumph. The brave Drucour kept up the defence until all the ships were either taken or destroyed, forty out of fifty-two pieces of cannon dismounted, and his works mere heaps of ruins. When driven to capitulate, he refused the terms proposed, as being too severe; and, when threatened with a general assault by sea and land, determined to abide it rather than submit to what he considered a humiliation. The prayers and petitions of the inhabitants, however, overcame his obstinacy. The place was surrendered, and he and his garrison became prisoners of war. Captain Amherst, brother to the general, carried home the news to England, with eleven pair of colours taken at Louisburg. There were rejoicings throughout the kingdom. The colours were borne in triumph through the streets of London, with a parade of horse and foot, kettle-drums and trumpets, and the thunder of artillery, and were put up as trophies in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Boscawen, who was a member of Parliament, received a unanimous vote of praise from the House of Commons, and the youthful Wolfe, who returned, shortly after the victory, to England, was hailed as the hero of the enterprise.

We have disposed of one of the three great expeditions contemplated in the plan of the year's campaign. The second was that against the French forts on Lakes George and Champlain. At the beginning of July, Abercrombie was encamped on the borders of Lake George, with between six and seven thousand regulars, and upwards of nine thousand provincials, from New England, New York, and New Jersey. Major Israel Putnam, of Connecticut, who had served on this lake, under Sir William Johnson, in the campaign in which Dieskau was defeated and slain, had been detached with a scouting party to reconnoitre the neighbourhood. After his return and report, Abercrombie prepared to proceed against Ticonderoga, situated on a tongue of land in Lake Champlain, at the mouth of the strait communicating with Lake George.

On the 5th of July the forces were embarked in one hundred and twenty-five whale-boats and nine hundred batteaux, with the artillery on rafts. The vast flotilla proceeded slowly down the lake with banners and pennons fluttering in the summer breeze, arms glittering in the sunshine, and martial music echoing along the wood-clad mountains. With Abercrombie went Lord Howe, a young nobleman, brave and enterprising, full of martial enthusiasm, and endeared to the soldiery by the generosity of his disposition and the sweetness of his manners.

On the first night they bivouacked for some hours at Sabbath-day Point, but re-embarked before midnight. The next day they landed on a point on the western shore, just at the entrance of the strait leading to Lake Champlain. Here they were formed into three columns, and pushed forward.

They soon came upon the enemy's advanced guard, a battalion encamped behind a log breastwork. The French set fire to their camp and retreated. The columns kept their form and pressed forward, but, through ignorance of their guides, became bewildered in a dense forest, fell into confusion, and blundered upon each other.

Lord Howe urged on with the van of the right centre column. Putnam, who was with him, and more experienced in forest warfare, endeavoured in vain to inspire him with caution. After a time they came upon a detach-

ment of the retreating foe, who, like themselves, had lost their way. A severe conflict ensued. Lord Howe, who gallantly led the van, was killed at the onset. His fall gave new ardour to his troops. The enemy were routed, some slain, some drowned, about one hundred and fifty taken prisoners, including five officers. Nothing further was done that day. The death of Lord Howe more than counterbalanced the defeat of the enemy. His loss was bewailed, not merely by the army, but by the American people; for it is singular how much this young nobleman, in a short time, had made himself beloved. The point near which the troops had landed still bears his name; the place where he fell is still pointed out; and Massachusetts voted him a monument in Westminster Abbey.

With Lord Howe expired the master-spirit of the enterprise. Abercrombie fell back to the landing-place. The next day he sent out a strong detachment of regulars, royal provincials, and batteaux men, under Lieutenant-Colonel Bradstreet, of New York, to secure a saw-mill which the enemy had abandoned. This done, he followed on the same evening with the main forces, and took post at the mill, within two miles of the fort. Here he was joined by Sir William Johnson, with between four and five hundred savage warriors from the Mohawk River.

Montcalm had called in all his forces, between three and four thousand men, and was strongly posted behind deep intrenchments and breastworks eight feet high, with an abbatis, or felled trees, in front of his lines, presenting a horrid barrier, with their jagged boughs pointing outward. Abercrombie was deceived as to the strength of the French works; his engineers persuaded him they were formidable only in appearance, but really weak and flimsy. Without waiting for the arrival of his cannon, and against the opinion of his most judicious officers, he gave orders to storm the works. Never were rash orders more gallantly obeyed. The men rushed forward with fixed bayonets, and attempted to force their way through, or scramble over the abbatis, under a sheeted fire of swivels and musketry. In the desperation of the moment, the officers even tried to cut their way through with their swords. Some even reached the parapet, where they were shot down. The breastwork

was too high to be surmounted, and gave a secure covert to the enemy. Repeated assaults were made, and as often repelled with dreadful havoc. The Iroquois warriors, who had arrived with Sir William Johnson, took no part, it is said, in this fierce conflict, but stood aloof as unconcerned spectators of the bloody strife of white men.

After four hours of desperate and fruitless fighting, Abercrombie, who had all the time remained aloof at the saw-mills, gave up the ill-judged attempt, and withdrew once more to the landing-place, with the loss of nearly two thousand in killed and wounded. Had not the vastly inferior force of Montcalm prevented him from sallying beyond his trenches, the retreat of the British might have been pushed to a headlong and disastrous flight.

Abercrombie had still nearly four times the number of the enemy, with cannon, and all the means of carrying on a siege with every prospect of success; but the failure of this rash assault seems completely to have dismayed him. The next day he re-embarked all his troops, and returned across that lake where his disgraced banners had recently waved so proudly.

While the general was planning fortifications on Lake George, Colonel Bradstreet obtained permission to carry into effect an expedition which he had for some time meditated, and which had been a favoured project with the lamented Howe. This was to reduce Fort Frontenac, the stronghold of the French on the north side of the entrance of Lake Ontario, commanding the mouth of the St. Lawrence. This post was a central point of Indian trade, where the tribes resorted from all parts of a vast interior, sometimes a distance of a thousand miles, to traffic away their peltries with the fur-traders. It was, moreover, a magazine for the more southern posts, among which was Fort Duquesne on the Ohio.

Bradstreet was an officer of spirit. Pushing his way along the valley of the Mohawk and by the Oneida, where he was joined by several warriors of the Six Nations, he arrived at Oswego in August with nearly three thousand men, the greater part of them provincial troops of New York and Massachusetts. Embarking at Oswego in open boats, he crossed Lake Ontario, and landed within a mile

of Frontenac. The fort mounted sixty guns and several mortars; yet, though a place of such importance, the garrison consisted of merely one hundred and ten men and a few Indians. These either fled or surrendered at discretion. In the fort was an immense amount of merchandise and military stores, part of the latter intended for the supply of Fort Duquesne. In the harbour were nine armed vessels, some of them carrying eighteen guns—the whole of the enemy's shipping on the lake. Two of these Colonel Bradstreet freighted with part of the spoils of the fort, the others he destroyed; then, having dismantled the fortifications, and laid waste everything which he could not carry away, he re-crossed the lake to Oswego, and returned with his troops to the army on Lake George.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Slow Operations—Washington orders out the Militia—Mission to Williamsburg—Halt at Mr. Chamberlayne's—Mrs. Martha Custis—A brief Courtship—An Engagement—Return to Winchester—The Rifle Dress—Indian Scouts—Washington elected to the House of Burgesses—Tidings of Amherst's Success—The New Road to Fort Duquesne—March for the Fort—Indiscreet Conduct of Major Grant—Disastrous Consequences—Washington advances against Fort Duquesne—End of the Expedition—Washington returns Home—His Marriage.

Operations went on slowly in that part of the year's campaign in which Washington was immediately engaged—the expedition against Fort Duquesne. Brigadier-general Forbes, who was commander-in-chief, was detained at Philadelphia by those delays and cross-purposes incident to military affairs in a new country. Colonel Bouquet, who was to command the advanced division, took his station, with a corps of regulars, at Raystown, in the centre of Pennsylvania. There, slowly assembled troops from various parts; three thousand Pennsylvanians, twelve hundred and fifty South Carolinians, and a few hundred men from elsewhere.

Washington, in the mean time, gathered together his scattered regiment at Winchester, some from a distance of two hundred miles, and diligently disciplined his recruits.

He had two Virginia regiments under him, amounting, when complete, to about nineteen hundred men. Seven hundred Indian warriors, also, came lagging into his camp, lured by the prospect of a successful campaign.

The president of the council had given Washington a discretionary power in the present juncture to order out militia for the purpose of garrisoning the fort in the absence of the regular troops. Washington exercised the power with extreme reluctance. He considered it, he said, an affair of too important and delicate a nature for him to manage, and apprehended the discontent it might occasion. In fact, his sympathies were always with the husbandmen and the labourers of the soil, and he deplored the evils imposed upon them by arbitrary drafts for military service; a scruple not often indulged by youthful commanders.

The force thus assembling was in want of arms, tents, field-equipage, and almost every requisite. Washington had made repeated representations, by letter, of the destitute state of the Virginia troops, but without avail; he was now ordered by Sir John St. Clair, the quartermaster-general of the forces under General Forbes, to repair to Williamsburg, and lay the state of the case before the council. He set off promptly on horseback, attended by Bishop, the well-trained military servant, who had served the late General Braddock. It proved an eventful journey, though not in a military point of view. In crossing a ferry of the Pamunkey, a branch of York River, he fell in company with a Mr. Chamberlayne, who lived in the neighbourhood, and who, in the spirit of Virginian hospitality, claimed him as a guest. It was with difficulty Washington could be prevailed on to halt for dinner, so impatient was he to arrive at Williamsburg and accomplish his mission.

Among the guests at Mr. Chamberlayne's was a young and blooming widow, Mrs. Martha Custis, daughter of Mr. John Dandridge, both patrician names in the province. Her husband, John Parke Custis, had been dead about three years, leaving her with two young children and a large fortune. She is represented as being rather below the middle size, but extremely well shaped, with an

agreeable countenance, dark hazel eyes and hair, and those frank, engaging manners, so captivating in Southern women. We are not informed whether Washington had met with her before; probably not during her widowhood, as during that time he had been almost continually on the frontier. We have shown that, with all his gravity and reserve, he was quickly susceptible to female charms; and they may have had a greater effect upon him when thus casually encountered in fleeting moments snatched from the cares and perplexities and rude scenes of frontier warfare. At any rate, his heart appears to have been taken by surprise.

The dinner, which in those days was an earlier meal than at present, seemed all too short. The afternoon passed away like a dream. Bishop was punctual to the orders he had received on halting; the horses pawed at the door; but for once Washington loitered in the path of duty. The horses were countermanded, and it was not until the next morning that he was again in the saddle, spurring for Williamsburg. Happily the White House, the residence of Mrs. Custis, was in New Kent County, at no great distance from that city, so that he had opportunities of visiting her in the intervals of business. His time for courtship, however, was brief. Military duties called him back almost immediately to Winchester; but he feared, should he leave the matter in suspense, some more enterprising rival might supplant him during his absence, as in the case of Miss Philipse, at New York. He improved, therefore, his brief opportunity to the utmost. The blooming widow had many suitors, but Washington was graced with that renown so ennobling in the eyes of woman. In a word, before they separated, they had mutually plighted their faith, and the marriage was to take place as soon as the campaign against Fort Duquesne was at an end.

Before returning to Winchester, Washington was obliged to hold conferences with Sir John St. Clair and Colonel Bouquet, at an intermediate rendezvous, to give them information respecting the frontiers and arrange about the marching of his troops. His constant word to them was forward! forward! For the precious time for action was

slipping away, and he feared their Indian allies, so important to their security while on the march, might, with their usual fickleness, lose patience and return home.

On arriving at Winchester, he found his troops restless and discontented from prolonged inaction; the inhabitants impatient of the burdens imposed on them, and of the disturbances of an idle camp; while the Indians, as he apprehended, had deserted outright. It was a great relief, therefore, when he received orders from the commander-in-chief to repair to Fort Cumberland. He arrived there on the 2nd of July, and proceeded to open a road between that post and head-quarters at Raystown, thirty miles distant, where Colonel Bouquet was stationed.

His troops were scantily supplied with regimental clothing. The weather was oppressively warm. He now conceived the idea of equipping them in the light Indian hunting garb, and even of adopting it himself. Two companies were accordingly equipped in this style, and sent under the command of Major Lewis to head-quarters. "It is an unbecoming dress, I own, for an officer," writes Washington, "but convenience rather than show, I think, should be consulted. The reduction of bât-horses alone would be sufficient to recommend it; for nothing is more certain than that less baggage would be required."

The experiment was successful. "The dress takes very well here," writes Colonel Bouquet, "and, thank God, we see nothing but shirts and blankets. * * * Their dress should be one pattern for this expedition." Such was probably the origin of the American rifle dress, afterwards so much worn in warfare, and modelled on the Indian costume.

The army was now annoyed by scouting parties of Indians hovering about the neighbourhood. Expresses passing between the posts were fired upon; a waggoner was shot down. Washington sent out counter-parties of Cherokees. Colonel Bouquet required that each party should be accompanied by an officer and a number of white men. Washington complied with the order, though he considered them an encumbrance rather than an advantage. "Small parties of Indians," said he, "will more effectually harass the enemy, by keeping them under con-

tinual alarms, than any parties of white men can do. For small parties of the latter are not equal to the task, not being so dexterous at skulking as Indians; and large parties will be discovered by their spies early enough to have a superior force opposed to them." With all his efforts, however, he was never able fully to make the officers of the regular army appreciate the importance of Indian allies in these campaigns in the wilderness.

On the other hand, he earnestly discountenanced a proposition of Colonel Bouquet, to make an irruption into the enemy's country with a strong party of regulars. Such a detachment, he observed, could not be sent without a cumbersome train of supplies, which would discover it to the enemy, who must at that time be collecting his whole force at Fort Duquesne; the enterprise, therefore, would be likely to terminate in a miscarriage, if not in the destruction of the party. We shall see that his opinion was oracular.

As Washington intended to retire from military life at the close of this campaign, he had proposed himself to the electors of Frederick County as their representative in the House of Burgesses. The election was coming on at Winchester; his friends pressed him to attend it, and Colonel Bouquet gave him leave of absence, but he declined to absent himself from his post for the promotion of his political interests. There were three competitors in the field, yet so high was the public opinion of his merit that, though Winchester had been his head quarters for two or three years past, and he had occasionally enforced martial law with a rigorous hand, he was elected by a large majority. The election was carried on somewhat in the English style. There was much eating and drinking at the expense of the candidate. Washington appeared on the hustings by proxy, and his representative was chaired about the town with enthusiastic applause and huzzaing for Colonel Washington.

On the 21st of July arrived tidings of the brilliant success of that part of the scheme of the year's campaign conducted by General Amherst and Admiral Boscawen, who had reduced the strong town of Louisburg and gained possession of the Island of Cape Breton. This intelligence

increased Washington's impatience at the delays of the expedition with which he was connected. He wished to rival these successes by a brilliant blow in the south. Perhaps a desire for personal distinction in the eyes of the lady of his choice may have been at the bottom of this impatience; for we are told that he kept up a constant correspondence with her throughout the campaign.

Understanding that the commander-in-chief had some thoughts of throwing a body of light troops in the advance, he wrote to Colonel Bouquet, earnestly soliciting his influence to have himself and his Virginia regiment included in the detachment. "If any argument is needed to obtain this favour," said he, "I hope, without vanity, I may be allowed to say that from long intimacy with these woods, and frequent scouting in them, my men are at least as well acquainted with all the passes and difficulties as any troops that will be employed."

He soon learnt to his surprise, however, that the road to which his men were accustomed, and which had been worked by Braddock's troops in his campaign, was not to be taken in the present expedition, but a new one opened through the heart of Pennsylvania, from Raystown to Fort Duquesne, on the track generally taken by the northern traders. He instantly commenced long and repeated remonstrances on the subject, representing that Braddock's road, from recent examination, only needed partial repairs, and showing by clear calculation that an army could reach Fort Duquesne by that route in thirty-four days, so that the whole campaign might be effected by the middle of October; whereas the extreme labour of opening a new road across mountains, swamps, and through a densely wooded country, would detain them so late that the season would be over before they could reach the scene of action. His representations were of no avail. The officers of the regular service had received a fearful idea of Braddock's road from his own despatches, wherein he had described it as lying "across mountains and rocks of an excessive height, vastly steep, and divided by torrents and rivers," whereas the Pennsylvania traders, who were anxious for the opening of the new road through their province, described the country through which it would pass as less

difficult, and its streams less subject to inundation; above all, it was a direct line and fifty miles nearer. This route, therefore, to the great regret of Washington and the indignation of the Virginian Assembly, was definitively adopted, and sixteen hundred men were immediately thrown in the advance from Raystown to work upon it.

The first of September found Washington still encamped at Fort Cumberland, his troops sickly and dispirited, and the brilliant expedition which he had anticipated dwindling down into a tedious operation of road-making. In the mean time his scouts brought him word that the whole force at Fort Duquesne on the 13th of August, Indians included, did not exceed eight hundred men; had an early campaign been pressed forward, as he recommended, the place by this time would have been captured. At length, in the month of September, he received orders from General Forbes to join him with his troops at Raystown, where he had just arrived, having been detained by severe illness. He was received by the general with the highest marks of respect. On all occasions, both in private and at councils of war, that commander treated his opinions with the greatest deference. He, moreover, adopted a plan drawn out by Washington for the march of the army; and an order of battle which still exists, furnishing a proof of his skill in frontier warfare.

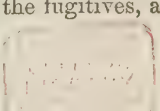
It was now the middle of September, yet the great body of men engaged in opening the new military road, after incredible toil, had not advanced above forty-five miles, to a place called Loyal Hannan, a little beyond Laurel Hill. Colonel Bouquet, who commanded the division of nearly two thousand men sent forward to open this road, had halted at Loyal Hannan to establish a military post and deposit.

He was still upwards of fifty miles from Fort Duquesne, and was tempted to adopt the measure, so strongly discountenanced by Washington, of sending a party on a foray into the enemy's country. He accordingly detached Major Grant with eight hundred picked men, some of them Highlanders, others, in Indian garb, the part of Washington's Virginian regiment sent forward by him from Cumberland under command of Major Lewis.

The instructions given to Major Grant were merely to reconnoitre the country in the neighbourhood of Fort Duquesne, and ascertain the strength and position of the enemy. He conducted the enterprise with the foolhardiness of a man eager for personal notoriety. His whole object seems to have been by open bravado to provoke an action. The enemy were apprised, through their scouts, of his approach, but suffered him to advance unmolested. Arriving at night in the neighbourhood of the fort, he posted his men on a hill, and sent out a party of observation, who set fire to a log house near the walls and returned to the encampment. As if this were not sufficient to put the enemy on the alert, he ordered the reveille to be beaten in the morning in several places; then posting Major Lewis with his provincial troops at a distance in the rear to protect the baggage, he marshalled his regulars in battle array, and sent an engineer, with a covering party, to take a plan of the works in full view of the garrison.

Not a gun was fired by the fort; the silence which was maintained was mistaken for fear, and increased the arrogance and blind security of the British commander. At length, when he was thrown off his guard, there was a sudden sally of the garrison, and an attack on the flanks by Indians hid in ambush. A scene now occurred similar to that at the defeat of Braddock. The British officers marshalled their men according to European tactics, and the Highlanders for some time stood their ground bravely; but the destructive fire and horrid yells of the Indians soon produced panic and confusion. Major Lewis, at the first noise of the attack, left Captain Bullitt, with fifty Virginians, to guard the baggage, and hastened with the main part of his men to the scene of action. The contest was kept up for some time, but the confusion was irretrievable. The Indians sallied from their concealment, and attacked with the tomahawk and scalping-knife. Lewis fought hand to hand with an Indian brave, whom he laid dead at his feet, but was surrounded by others, and only saved his life by surrendering himself to a French officer. Major Grant surrendered himself in like manner. The whole detachment was put to the rout with dreadful carnage.

Captain Bullitt rallied several of the fugitives, and pre-



pared to make a forlorn stand, as the only chance where the enemy was overwhelming and merciless. Despatching the most valuable baggage with the strongest horses, he made a barricade with the baggage waggons, behind which he posted his men, giving them orders how they were to act. All this was the thought and the work almost of a moment, for the savages, having finished the havoc and plunder of the field of battle, were hastening in pursuit of the fugitives. Bullitt suffered them to come near, when, on a concerted signal, a destructive fire was opened from behind the baggage waggons. They were checked for a time; but were again pressing forward in greater numbers, when Bullitt and his men held out the signal of capitulation, and advanced as if to surrender. When within eight yards of the enemy they suddenly levelled their arms, poured a most effective volley, and then charged with the bayonet. The Indians fled in dismay, and Bullitt took advantage of this check to retreat with all speed, collecting the wounded and the scattered fugitives as he advanced. The routed detachment came back in fragments to Colonel Bouquet's camp at Loyal Hannan, with the loss of twenty-one officers and two hundred and seventy-three privates killed and taken. The Highlanders and the Virginians were those that fought the best and suffered the most in this bloody battle. Washington's regiment lost six officers and sixty-two privates.

If Washington could have taken any pride in seeing his presages of misfortune verified, he might have been gratified by the result of this rash "irruption into the enemy's country," which was exactly what he had predicted. In his letters to Governor Fauquier, however, he bears lightly on the error of Major Bouquet. "From all accounts I can collect," says he, "it appears very clear that this was a very ill-concerted or a very ill-executed plan, perhaps both; but it seems to be generally acknowledged that Major Grant exceeded his orders, and that no disposition was made for engaging."

Washington, who was at Raystown when the disastrous news arrived, was publicly complimented by General Forbes on the gallant conduct of his Virginian troops, and Bullitt's behaviour was "a matter of great admiration."

The latter was soon after rewarded with a major's commission.

As a further mark of the high opinion now entertained of provincial troops for frontier service, Washington was given the command of a division, partly composed of his own men, to keep in the advance of the main body, clear the roads, throw out scouting parties, and repel Indian attacks.

It was the 5th of November before the whole army assembled at Loyal Hannan. Winter was now at hand, and upwards of fifty miles of wilderness were yet to be traversed, by a road not yet formed, before they could reach Fort Duquesne. Again, Washington's predictions seemed likely to be verified, and the expedition to be defeated by delay; for in a council of war it was determined to be impracticable to advance further with the army that season. Three prisoners, however, who were brought in, gave such an account of the weak state of the garrison at Fort Duquesne, its want of provisions, and the defection of the Indians, that it was determined to push forward. The march was accordingly resumed, but without tents or baggage, and with only a light train of artillery.

Washington still kept the advance. After leaving Loyal Hannan, the road presented traces of the late defeat of Grant; being strewed with human bones, the sad relics of fugitives cut down by the Indians, or of wounded soldiers who had died on the retreat; they lay mouldering in various stages of decay, mingled with the bones of horses and of oxen. As they approached Fort Duquesne these mementos of former disasters became more frequent; and the bones of those massacred in the defeat of Braddock, still lay scattered about the battle field, whitening in the sun.

At length the army arrived in sight of Fort Duquesne, advancing with great precaution, and expecting a vigorous defence; but that formidable fortress, the terror and scourge of the frontier, and the object of such warlike enterprise, fell without a blow. The recent successes of the English forces in Canada, particularly the capture and destruction of Fort Frontenac, had left the garrison without hope of reinforcements and supplies. The whole force,

at the time, did not exceed five hundred men, and the provisions were nearly exhausted. The commander, therefore, waited only until the English army was within one day's march, when he embarked his troops at night in batteaux, blew up his magazines, set fire to the fort, and retreated down the Ohio, by the light of the flames. On the 25th of November, Washington, with the advanced guard, marched in, and planted the British flag on the yet smoking ruins.

One of the first offices of the army was to collect and bury, in one common tomb, the bones of their fellow-soldiers who had fallen in the battles of Braddock and Grant. In this pious duty it is said every one joined, from the general down to the private soldier; and some veterans assisted, with heavy hearts and frequent ejaculations of poignant feeling, who had been present in the scenes of defeat and carnage.

The ruins of the fortress were now put in a defensible state, and garrisoned by two hundred men from Washington's regiment; the name was changed to that of Fort Pitt, in honour of the illustrious British minister, whose measures had given vigour and effect to this year's campaign; it has since been modified into Pittsburg, and designates one of the most busy and populous cities of the interior.

The reduction of Fort Duquesne terminated, as Washington had foreseen, the troubles and dangers of the southern frontier. The French domination of the Ohio was at an end; the Indians, as usual, paid homage to the conquering power, and a treaty of peace was concluded with all the tribes between the Ohio and the lakes.

With this campaign ended, for the present, the military career of Washington. His great object was attained, the restoration of quiet and security to his native province; and having abandoned all hope of attaining rank in the regular army, and his health being much impaired, he gave up his commission at the close of the year, and retired from the service, followed by the applause of his fellow-soldiers, and the gratitude and admiration of all his countrymen.

His marriage with Mrs. Custis took place shortly after his return. It was celebrated on the 6th of January, 1759,

at the White House, the residence of the bride, in the good old hospitable style of Virginia, amid a joyous assemblage of relatives and friends.

CHAPTER XXV.

Plan of Operations for 1759—Investment of Fort Niagara—Death of Prideaux—Success of Sir William Johnson—Amherst at Ticonderoga—Wolfe at Quebec—His Triumph and Death—Fate of Montcalm—Capitulation of Quebec—Attempt of De Levi to retake it—Arrival of a British Fleet—Last stand of the French at Montreal—Surrender of Canada.

Before following Washington into the retirement of domestic life, we think it proper to notice the events which closed the great struggle between England and France for empire in America. In that struggle he had first become practised in arms, and schooled in the ways of the world; and its results will be found connected with the history of his later years.

General Abercrombie had been superseded as commander-in-chief of the forces in America by Major-general Amherst, who had gained great favour by the reduction of Louisburg. According to the plan of operations for 1759, General Wolfe, who had risen to fame by his gallant conduct in the same affair, was to ascend the St. Lawrence in a fleet of ships of war, with eight thousand men, as soon as the river should be free of ice, and lay siege to Quebec, the capital of Canada. General Amherst, in the meantime, was to advance, as Abercrombie had done, by Lake George against Ticonderoga and Crown Point; reduce those forts, cross Lake Champlain, push on to the St. Lawrence, and co-operate with Wolfe.

A third expedition, under Brigadier-general Prideaux, aided by Sir William Johnson and his Indian warriors, was to attack Fort Niagara, which controlled the whole country of the Six Nations, and commanded the navigation of the great lakes, and the intercourse between Canada and Louisiana. Having reduced this fort, he was to traverse Lake Ontario, descend the St. Lawrence, capture Montreal, and join his forces with those of Amherst.

The last mentioned expedition was the first executed. General Prideaux embarked at Oswego on the first of July, with a large body of troops, regulars and provincials,—the latter partly from New York. He was accompanied by Sir William Johnson, and his Indian braves of the Mohawk. Landing at an inlet of Lake Ontario, within a few miles of Fort Niagara, he advanced without being opposed, and proceeded to invest it. The garrison, six hundred strong, made a resolute defence. The siege was carried on by regular approaches, but pressed with vigour. On the 20th of July, Prideaux, in visiting his trenches, was killed by the bursting of a cohorn. Informed by express of this misfortune, General Amherst detached from the main army Brigadier-general Gage, the officer who had led Braddock's advance, to take the command.

In the mean time, the siege had been conducted by Sir William Johnson with courage and sagacity. He was destitute of military science, but had a natural aptness for warfare, especially for the rough kind carried on in the wilderness. Being informed by his scouts that twelve hundred regular troops, drawn from Detroit, Venango, and Presque Isle, and led by D'Aubry, with a number of Indian auxiliaries, were hastening to the rescue, he detached a force of grenadiers and light infantry, with some of his Mohawk warriors, to intercept them. They came in sight of each other on the road, between Niagara Falls and the fort, within the thundering sound of the one and the distant view of the other. Johnson's "braves" advanced to have a parley with the hostile redskins. The latter received them with a war-whoop, and Frenchman and savage made an impetuous onset. Johnson's regulars and provincials stood their ground firmly, while his red warriors fell on the flanks of the enemy. After a sharp conflict, the French were broken, routed, and pursued through the woods, with great carnage. Among the prisoners taken were seventeen officers. The next day Sir William Johnson sent a trumpet, summoning the garrison to surrender, to spare the effusion of blood, and prevent outrages by the Indians. They had no alternative; were permitted to march out with the honours of war, and were protected by Sir William from his Indian allies. Thus was secured the key to the communi-

cation between Lakes Ontario and Erie, and to the vast interior region connected with them. The blow alarmed the French for the safety of Montreal, and De Levi, the second in command of their Canadian forces, hastened up from before Quebec, and took post at the fort of Oswegatchie (now Ogdensburg), to defend the passes of the St. Lawrence.

We now proceed to notice the expedition against Ticonderoga and Crown Point. In the month of July, General Amherst embarked with nearly twelve thousand men, at the upper part of Lake George, and proceeded down it, as Abercrombie had done in the preceding year, in a vast fleet of whale-boats, batteaux, and rafts, and all the glitter and parade of war. On the 22nd, the army debarked at the lower part of the lake, and advanced toward Ticonderoga. After a slight skirmish with the advanced guard, they secured the old post at the saw-mill.

Montcalm was no longer in the fort; he was absent for the protection of Quebec. The garrison did not exceed four hundred men. Bourlamarque, a brave officer, who commanded, at first seemed disposed to make defence; but, against such overwhelming force it would have been madness. Dismantling the fortifications, therefore, he abandoned them, as he did likewise those at Crown Point, and retreated down the lake, to assemble forces, and make a stand at the Isle aux Noix, for the protection of Montreal and the province.

Instead of following him up, and hastening to co-operate with Wolfe, General Amherst proceeded to repair the works at Ticonderoga, and erect a new fort at Crown Point, though neither were in present danger of being attacked, nor would be of use if Canada were conquered. Amherst, however, was one of those cautious men, who, in seeking to be sure, are apt to be fatally slow. His delay enabled the enemy to rally their forces at Isle aux Noix, and call in Canadian reinforcements, while it deprived Wolfe of that co-operation which, it will be shown, was most essential to the general success of the campaign.

Wolfe, with his eight thousand men, ascended the St. Lawrence in the fleet, in the month of June. With him came Brigadiers Monckton, Townsend, and Murray, youth-

ful and brave like himself, and like himself already schooled in arms. Monckton, it will be recollected, had signalized himself, when a colonel, in the expedition in 1755, in which the French were driven from Nova Scotia. The grenadiers of the army were commanded by Colonel Guy Carleton, and part of the light infantry by Lieutenant-Colonel William Howe, both destined to celebrity in after years, in the annals of the American Revolution. Colonel Howe was brother of the gallant Lord Howe, whose fall in the preceding year was so generally lamented. Among the officers of the fleet, was Jervis, the future admiral, and ultimately Earl St. Vincent; and the master of one of the ships, was James Cook, afterwards renowned as a discoverer.

About the end of June, the troops debarked on the large, populous, and well-cultivated Isle of Orleans, a little below Quebec, and encamped in its fertile fields. Quebec, the citadel of Canada, was strong by nature. It was built round the point of a rocky promontory, and flanked by precipices. The crystal current of the St. Lawrence swept by it on the right, and the river St. Charles flowed along on the left, before mingling with that mighty stream. The place was tolerably fortified, but art had not yet rendered it, as at the present day, impregnable.

Montcalm commanded the post. His troops were more numerous than the assailants; but the greater part were Canadians, many of them inhabitants of Quebec; and he had a host of savages. His force was drawn out along the northern shore below the city, from the river St. Charles to the falls of Montmorency, and their position was secured by deep intrenchments.

The night after the debarkation of Wolfe's troops a furious storm caused great damage to the transports, and sank some of the small craft. While it was still raging, a number of fire-ships, sent to destroy the fleet, came driving down. They were boarded intrepidly by the British seamen, and towed out of the way of doing harm. After much resistance, Wolfe established batteries on the west point of the Isle of Orleans, and at Point Levi, on the right (or south) bank of the St. Lawrence, within cannon range of the city. Colonel Guy Carleton, commander at the former battery; Brigadier Monckton at the latter. From

Point Levi bombshells and red-hot shot were discharged; many houses were set on fire in the upper town, the lower town was reduced to rubbish; the main fort, however, remained unharmed.

Anxious for a decisive action, Wolfe, on the 9th of July, crossed over in boats from the Isle of Orleans, to the north bank of the St. Lawrence, and encamped below the Montmorency. It was an ill-judged position, for there was still that tumultuous stream, with its rocky banks, between him and the camp of Montcalm; but the ground he had chosen was higher than that occupied by the latter, and the Montmorency had a ford below the falls passable at low tide. Another ford was discovered, three miles within land, but the banks were steep, and shagged with forest. At both fords the vigilant Montcalm had thrown up breastworks, and posted troops.

On the 18th of July, Wolfe made a reconnoitring expedition up the river, with two armed sloops, and two transports with troops. He passed Quebec unharmed, and carefully noted the shores above it. Rugged cliffs rose almost from the water's edge. Above them, he was told, was an extent of level ground, called the Plains of Abraham, by which the upper town might be approached on its weakest side; but how was that plain to be attained, when the cliffs, for the most part, were inaccessible, and every practicable place fortified?

He returned to Montmorency disappointed, and resolved to attack Montcalm in his camp, however difficult to be approached, and however strongly posted. Townsend and Murray, with their brigades, were to cross the Montmorency at low tide, below the falls, and storm the redoubt thrown up in front of the ford. Monckton, at the same time, was to cross, with part of his brigade, in boats from Point Levi. The ship Centurion, stationed in the channel, was to check the fire of a battery which commanded the ford; a train of artillery, planted on an eminence, was to enfilade the enemy's intrenchments; and two armed, flat-bottomed boats, were to be run on shore, near the redoubt, and favour the crossing of the troops.

As usual, in complicated orders, part were misunderstood, or neglected, and confusion was the consequence.

Many of the boats from Point Levi ran aground on a shallow in the river, where they were exposed to a severe fire of shot and shells. Wolfe, who was on the shore, directing every thing, endeavoured to stop his impatient troops until the boats could be got afloat, and the men landed. Thirteen companies of grenadiers, and two hundred provincials were the first to land. Without waiting for Brigadier Monckton and his regiments; without waiting for the co-operation of the troops under Townshend; without waiting even to be drawn up in form, the grenadiers rushed impetuously towards the enemy's intrenchments. A sheeted fire mowed them down, and drove them to take shelter behind the redoubt, near the ford, which the enemy had abandoned. Here they remained, unable to form under the galling fire to which they were exposed, whenever they ventured from their covert. Monckton's brigade at length was landed, drawn up in order, and advanced to their relief, driving back the enemy. Thus protected, the grenadiers retreated as precipitately as they had advanced, leaving many of their comrades wounded on the field, who were massacred and scalped in their sight, by the savages. The delay thus caused was fatal to the enterprise. The day was advanced; the weather became stormy; the tide began to make; at a later hour, retreat, in case of a second repulse, would be impossible. Wolfe, therefore, gave up the attack, and withdrew across the river, having lost upwards of four hundred men, through this headlong impetuosity of the grenadiers. The two vessels which had been run aground, were set on fire, lest they should fall into the hands of the enemy.[1]

Brigadier Murray was now detached with twelve hundred men, in transports, to ascend above the town, and co-operate with Rear-admiral Holmes, in destroying the enemy's shipping, and making descents upon the north shore. The shipping were safe from attack; some stores and ammunition were destroyed; some prisoners taken, and Murray returned with the news of the capture of Fort Niagara, Ticonderoga, and Crown Point, and that Amherst was preparing to attack the Isle aux Noix.

[1] Wolfe's Letter to Pitt, Sept. 2nd, 1759.

Wolfe, of a delicate constitution and sensitive nature, had been deeply mortified by the severe check sustained at the Falls of Montmorency, fancying himself disgraced; and these successes of his fellow-commanders in other parts increased his self-upbraiding. The difficulties multiplying around him, and the delay of General Amherst in hastening to his aid, preyed incessantly on his spirits; he was dejected even to despondency, and declared he would never return without success, to be exposed, like other unfortunate commanders, to the sneers and reproaches of the populace. The agitation of his mind, and his acute sensibility, brought on a fever, which for some time incapacitated him from taking the field.

In the midst of his illness he called a council of war, in which the whole plan of operations was altered. It was determined to convey troops above the town, and endeavour to make a diversion in that direction, or draw Montcalm into the open field. Before carrying this plan into effect, Wolfe again reconnoitred the town in company with Admiral Saunders, but nothing better suggested itself.

The brief Canadian summer was over; they were in the month of September. The camp at Montmorency was broken up. The troops were transported to Point Levi, leaving a sufficient number to man the batteries on the Isle of Orleans. On the fifth and sixth of September the embarkation took place above Point Levi, in transports which had been sent up for the purpose. Montcalm detached De Bougainville with fifteen hundred men to keep along the north shore above the town, watch the movements of the squadron, and prevent a landing. To deceive him, Admiral Holmes moved with the ships of war three leagues beyond the place where the landing was to be attempted. He was to drop down, however, in the night, and protect the landing. Cook, the future discoverer, also, was employed with others to sound the river and place buoys opposite the camp of Montcalm, as if an attack were meditated in that quarter.

Wolfe was still suffering under the effects of his late fever. "My constitution," writes he to a friend, "is entirely ruined, without the consolation of having done any considerable service to the state, and without any

prospect of it." Still he was unremitting in his exertions, seeking to wipe out the fancied disgrace incurred at the Falls of Montmorency. It was in this mood he is said to have composed and sung at his evening mess that little campaigning song still linked with his name:

"Why, soldiers, why
Should we be melancholy, boys?
Why, soldiers, why?
Whose business 'tis to die!"

Even when embarked in his midnight enterprise, the presentiment of death seems to have cast its shadow over him. A midshipman who was present,[2] used to relate, that as Wolfe sat among his officers, and the boats floated down silently with the current, he recited, in low and touching tones, Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard, then just published. One stanza may especially have accorded with his melancholy mood.

"The boast of heraldy, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour.
The path of glory leads but to the grave."

"Now gentlemen," said he, when he had finished, "I would rather be the author of that poem than take Quebec."

The descent was made in flat-bottomed boats, past midnight on the 13th of September. They dropped down silently with the swift current. *Qui va là?* (who goes there?) cried a sentinel from the shore. "*La France*," replied a captain in the first boat, who understood the French language. "*A quel régiment?*" was the demand. "*De la Reine*" (the queen's), replied the captain, knowing that regiment was in De Bougainville's detachment. Fortunately a convoy of provisions was expected down from De Bougainville's, which the sentinel supposed this to be. "*Passe*," cried he, and the boats glided on without further challenge. The landing took place in a cove near Cape Diamond, which still bears Wolfe's name. He had marked it in reconnoitring, and saw that a cragged path straggled up from it to the Heights of Abraham, which might be climbed, though with difficulty, and that it appeared to be slightly guarded at top. Wolfe was among

[2] Afterwards Professor John Robinson, of Edinburgh.

the first that landed and ascended up the steep and narrow path, where not more than two could go abreast, and which had been broken up by cross ditches. Colonel Howe, at the same time, with the light infantry and Highlanders, scrambled up the woody precipices, helping themselves by the roots and branches, and putting to flight a sergeant's guard posted at the summit. Wolfe drew up the men in order as they mounted: and by the break of day found himself in possession of the fateful Plains of Abraham.

Montcalm was thunderstruck when word was brought to him in his camp that the English were on the heights, threatening the weakest part of the town. Abandoning his intrenchments, he hastened across the river St. Charles and ascended the heights, which slope up gradually from its banks. His force was equal in number to that of the English, but a great part was made up of colony troops and savages. When he saw the formidable host of regulars he had to contend with, he sent off swift messengers to summon De Bougainville with his detachment to his aid; and De Vaudreuil to reinforce him with fifteen hundred men from the camp. In the mean time he prepared to flank the left of the English line and force them to the opposite precipices. Wolfe saw his aim, and sent Brigadier Townshend to counteract him with a regiment which was formed *en potence*, and supported by two battalions, presenting on the left a double front.

The French, in their haste, thinking they were to repel a mere scouting party, had brought but three light field-pieces with them; the English had but a single gun, which the sailors had dragged up the heights. With these they cannonaded each other for a time, Montcalm still waiting for the aid he had summoned. At length, about nine o'clock, losing all patience, he led on his disciplined troops to a close conflict with small arms, the Indians to support them by a galling fire from thickets and corn-fields. The French advanced gallantly, but irregularly; firing rapidly, but with little effect. The English reserved their fire until their assailants were within forty yards, and then delivered it in deadly volleys. They suffered, however, from the lurking savages, who singled out the officers. Wolfe, who was in front of the line, a conspicuous mark, was

wounded by a ball in the wrist. He bound his handkerchief round the wound and led on the grenadiers, with fixed bayonets, to charge the foe, who began to waver. Another ball struck him in the breast. He felt the wound to be mortal, and feared his fall might dishearten the troops. Leaning on a lieutenant for support; "Let not my brave fellows see me drop," said he faintly. He was borne off to the rear; water was brought to quench his thirst, and he was asked if he would have a surgeon. "It is needless," he replied, "it is all over with me." He desired those about him to lay him down. The lieutenant seated himself on the ground, and supported him in his arms. "They run! they run! see how they run!" cried one of the attendants. "Who run?" demanded Wolfe, earnestly, like one aroused from sleep. "The enemy, sir; they give way everywhere." The spirit of the expiring hero flashed up. "Go, one of you, my lads, to Colonel Burton; tell him to march Webb's regiment with all speed down to Charles' River, to cut off the retreat by the bridge." Then turning on his side; "Now, God be praised, I will die in peace!" said he, and expired,[3]—soothed in his last moments by the idea that victory would obliterate the imagined disgrace at Montmorency.

Brigadier Murray had indeed broken the centre of the enemy, and the Highlanders were making deadly havoc with their claymores, driving the French into the town or down to their works on the river St. Charles. Monckton, the first brigadier, was disabled by a wound in the lungs, and the command devolved on Townshend, who hastened to re-form the troops of the centre, disordered in pursuing the enemy. By this time De Bougainville appeared at a distance in the rear, advancing with two thousand fresh troops; but he arrived too late to retrieve the day. The gallant Montcalm had received his death-wound near St. John's Gate, while endeavouring to rally his flying troops, and had been borne into the town.

Townshend advanced with a force to receive De Bougainville; but the latter avoided a combat, and retired into woods and swamps, where it was not thought prudent to

[3] Hist Jour. of Capt. John Knox, vol. i., p. 79.

follow him. The English had obtained a complete victory; slain about five hundred of the enemy; taken above a thousand prisoners, and among them several officers; and had a strong position on the Plains of Abraham, which they hastened to fortify with redoubts and artillery, drawn up the heights.

The brave Montcalm wrote a letter to General Townshend, recommending the prisoners to British humanity. When told by his surgeon that he could not survive above a few hours; "So much the better," replied he, "I am happy; I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec." To De Ramsey, the French king's lieutenant, who commanded the garrison, he consigned the defence of the city. "To your keeping," said he, "I commend the honour of France. I'll neither give orders, nor interfere any further. I have business to attend to of greater moment than your ruined garrison, and this wretched country. My time is short,—I shall pass this night with God, and prepare myself for death. I wish you all comfort; and to be happily extricated from your present perplexities." He then called for his chaplain, who with the bishop of the colony, remained with him through the night. He expired early in the morning, dying like a brave soldier and a devout Catholic. Never did two worthier foes mingle their life blood on the battle-field than Wolfe and Montcalm.[4]

Preparations were now made by the army and the fleet to make an attack on both the upper and lower town; but the spirit of the garrison was broken, and the inhabitants were clamorous for the safety of their wives and children. On the 17th of September, Quebec capitulated, and was taken possession of by the British, who hastened to put it in a complete posture of defence. A garrison of six thousand effective men was placed in it, under the command of Brigadier-general Murray, and victualled from the fleet. General Townshend embarked with Admiral Saunders, and returned to England: and the wounded General Monckton was conveyed to New York, of which he afterwards became governor.

Had Amherst followed up his success at Ticonderoga the

[4] Knox, Hist. Jour., vol. i., p. 77.

preceding summer, the year's campaign would have ended, as had been projected, in the subjugation of Canada. His cautious delay gave De Levi, the successor of Montcalm. time to rally, concentrate the scattered French forces, and struggle for the salvation of the province.

In the following spring, as soon as the river St. Lawrence opened, he approached Quebec, and landed at Point au Tremble, about twelve miles off. The garrison had suffered dreadfully during the winter from excessive cold, want of vegetables and of fresh provisions. Many had died of scurvy, and many more were ill. Murray, sanguine and injudicious, on hearing that De Levi was advancing with ten thousand men and five hundred Indians, sallied out with his diminished forces of not more than three thousand. English soldiers, he boasted, were habituated to victory; he had a fine train of artillery, and stood a better chance in the field than cooped up in a wretched fortification. If defeated, he would defend the place to the last extremity, and then retreat to the Isle of Orleans, and wait for reinforcements. More brave than discreet, he attacked the vanguard of the enemy; the battle which took place was fierce and sanguinary. Murray's troops had caught his own headlong valour, and fought until near a third of their number were slain. They were at length driven back into the town, leaving their boasted train of artillery on the field.

De Levi opened trenches before the town the very evening of the battle. Three French ships, which had descended the river, furnished him with cannon, mortars, and ammunition. By the 11th of May, he had one bomb battery, and three batteries of cannon. Murray, equally alert within the walls, strengthened his defences, and kept up a vigorous fire. His garrison was now reduced to two hundred and twenty effective men, and he himself, with all his vaunting spirit, was driven almost to despair, when a British fleet arrived in the river. The whole scene was now reversed. One of the French frigates was driven on the rocks above Cape Diamond; another ran on shore, and was burnt; the rest of their vessels were either taken, or destroyed. The besieging army retreated in the night, leaving provisions, implements, and artillery behind them;

and so rapid was their flight, that Murray, who sallied forth on the following day, could not overtake them.

A last stand for the preservation of the colony was now made by the French at Montreal, where De Vaudreuil fixed his head-quarters, fortified himself, and called in all possible aid, Canadian and Indian.

The cautious, but tardy Amherst, was now in the field to carry out the plan in which he had fallen short in the previous year. He sent orders to General Murray to advance by water against Montreal with all the force that could be spared from Quebec; he detached a body of troops under Colonel Haviland, from Crown Point, to cross Lake Champlain, take possession of the Isle aux Noix, and push on to the St. Lawrence, while he took the roundabout way with his main army by the Mohawk and Oneida Rivers to Lake Ontario, thence to descend the St. Lawrence to Montreal.

Murray, according to orders, embarked his troops in a great number of small vessels, and ascended the river in characteristic style, publishing manifestoes in the Canadian villages, disarming the inhabitants, and exacting the oath of neutrality. He looked forward to new laurels at Montreal, but the slow and sure Amherst had anticipated him. That worthy general, after delaying on Lake Ontario to send out cruisers, and stopping to repair petty forts on the upper part of the St. Lawrence which had been deserted by their garrisons, or surrendered without firing a gun, arrived on the 6th of September at the island of Montreal, routed some light skirmishing parties, and presented himself before the town. Vaudreuil found himself threatened by an army of nearly ten thousand men and a host of Indians; for Amherst had called in the aid of Sir William Johnson and his Mohawk braves. To withstand a siege in an almost open town against such superior force was out of the question, especially as Murray from Quebec, and Haviland from Crown Point, were at hand with additional troops. A capitulation accordingly took place on the 8th of September, including the surrender not merely of Montreal, but of all Canada.

Thus ended the contest between France and England for dominion in America, in which, as has been said, the

first gun was fired in Washington's encounter with De Jumonville. A French statesman and diplomatist consoled himself by the persuasion that it would be a fatal triumph to England. It would remove the only check by which her colonies were kept in awe. "They will no longer need her protection," said he; "she will call on them to contribute toward supporting the burdens they have helped to bring on her, and *they will answer by striking off her dependence.*"[5]

CHAPTER XXVI.

Washington's Installation in the House of Burgesses—His Rural Life—Mount Vernon and its Vicinity—Aristocratical Days of Virginia—Washington's Management of his Estate—Domestic Habits—Fox-Hunting—Lord Fairfax—Fishing and Duck-Shooting—The Poacher—Lynch Law—Aquatic State—Life at Annapolis—Washington in the Dismal Swamp.

For three months after his marriage, Washington resided with his bride at the "White House." During his sojourn there, he repaired to Williamsburg, to take his seat in the House of Burgesses. By a vote of the House, it had been determined to greet his instalment by a signal testimonial of respect. Accordingly, as soon as he took his seat, Mr. Robinson, the Speaker, in eloquent language, dictated by the warmth of private friendship, returned thanks, on behalf of the colony, for the distinguished military services he had rendered to his country.

Washington rose to reply — blushed — stammered — trembled—and could not utter a word. "Sit down, Mr. Washington," said the Speaker, with a smile; "your modesty equals your valour, and that surpasses the power of any language I possess."

Such was Washington's first launch into civil life, in which he was to be distinguished by the same judgment, devotion, courage, and magnanimity, exhibited in his military career. He attended the House frequently during the remainder of the session, after which he conducted his bride to his favourite abode of Mount Vernon.

Mr. Custis, the first husband of Mrs. Washington, had

[5] Duke de Choiseul.

left large landed property, and forty-five thousand pounds sterling in money. One-third fell to his widow in her own right; two-thirds were inherited equally by her two children—a boy of six, and a girl of four years of age. By a decree of the General Court, Washington was intrusted with the care of the property inherited by the children; a sacred and delicate trust, which he discharged in the most faithful and judicious manner, becoming more like a parent than a mere guardian to them.

From a letter to his correspondent in England, it would appear that he had long entertained a desire to visit that country. Had he done so, his acknowledged merit and military services would have insured him a distinguished reception; and it has been intimated that the signal favour of government might have changed the current of his career. We believe him, however, to have been too pure a patriot, and too clearly possessed of the true interests of his country, to be diverted from the course which he ultimately adopted. His marriage, at any rate, had put an end to all travelling inclinations. In his letter from Mount Vernon, he writes: "I am now, I believe, fixed in this seat, with an agreeable partner for life, and I hope to find more happiness in retirement than I ever experienced in the wide and bustling world."

This was no Utopian dream transiently indulged amid the charms of novelty. It was a deliberate purpose with him, the result of innate and enduring inclinations. Throughout the whole course of his career agricultural life appears to have been his *beau idéal* of existence, which haunted his thoughts even amid the stern duties of the field, and to which he recurred with unflagging interest whenever enabled to indulge his natural bias.

Mount Vernon was his harbour of repose, where he repeatedly furled his sail, and fancied himself anchored for life. No impulse of ambition tempted him thence; nothing but the call of his country and his devotion to the public good. The place was endeared to him by the remembrance of his brother Lawrence, and of the happy days he had passed here with that brother in the days of boyhood; but it was a delightful place in itself, and well calculated to inspire the rural feeling.

The mansion was beautifully situated on a swelling height, crowned with wood, and commanding a magnificent view up and down the Potomac. The grounds immediately about it were laid out somewhat in the English taste. The estate was apportioned into separate farms, devoted to different kinds of culture, each having its allotted labourers. Much, however, was still covered with wild woods, seamed with deep dells and runs of water, and indented with inlets, haunts of deer, and lurking-places of foxes. The whole woody region along the Potomac from Mount Vernon to Belvoir, and far beyond, with its range of forests and hills, and picturesque promontories, afforded sport of various kinds, and was a noble hunting-ground. Washington had hunted through it with old Lord Fairfax in his stripling days; we do not wonder that his feelings throughout life incessantly reverted to it.

"No estate in United America," observes he, in one of his letters, "is more pleasantly situated. In a high and healthy country; in a latitude between the extremes of heat and cold; on one of the finest rivers in the world; a river well stocked with various kinds of fish at all seasons of the year, and in the spring with shad, herrings, bass, carp, sturgeon, &c., in great abundance. The borders of the estate are washed by more than ten miles of tide water; several valuable fisheries appertain to it; the whole shore, in fact, is one entire fishery."

These were, as yet, the aristocratical days of Virginia. The estates were large, and continued in the same families by entails. Many of the wealthy planters were connected with old families in England. The young men, especially the elder sons, were often sent to finish their education there, and on their return brought out the tastes and habits of the mother country. The governors of Virginia were from the higher ranks of society, and maintained a corresponding state. The "established," or Episcopal church, predominated throughout the "ancient dominion," as it was termed; each county was divided into parishes, as in England—each with its parochial church, its parsonage, and glebe. Washington was vestryman of two parishes, Fairfax and Truro; the parochial church of the

former was at Alexandria, ten miles from Mount Vernon; of the latter, at Pohick, about seven miles. The church at Pohick was rebuilt on a plan of his own, and in a great measure at his expense. At one or other of these churches he attended every Sunday, when the weather and the roads permitted. His demeanour was reverential and devout. Mrs. Washington knelt during the prayers; he always stood, as was the custom at that time. Both were communicants.

Among his occasional visitors and associates were Captain Hugh Mercer and Dr. Craik; the former, after his narrow escapes from the tomahawk and scalping-knife, was quietly settled at Fredericksburg; the latter, after the campaigns on the frontier were over, had taken up his residence at Alexandria, and was now Washington's family physician. Both were drawn to him by campaigning ties and recollections, and were ever welcome at Mount Vernon.

A style of living prevailed among the opulent Virginian families in those days that has long since faded away. The houses were spacious, commodious, liberal in all their appointments, and fitted to cope with the free-handed, open-hearted hospitality of the owners. Nothing was more common than to see handsome services of plate, elegant equipages, and superb carriage-horses—all imported from England.

The Virginians have always been noted for their love of horses; a manly passion which, in those days of opulence, they indulged without regard to expense. The rich planters vied with each other in their studs, importing the best English stocks. Mention is made of one of the Randolphs of Tuckahoe, who built a stable for his favourite dapple-gray horse, Shakespeare, with a recess for the bed of the negro groom, who always slept beside him at night.

Washington, by his marriage, had added above one hundred thousand dollars to his already considerable fortune, and was enabled to live in ample and dignified style. His intimacy with the Fairfaxes, and his intercourse with British officers of rank, had perhaps had their influence on his mode of living. He had his chariot and four, with black postilions in livery, for the use of Mrs.

Washington and her lady visitors. As for himself, he always appeared on horseback. His stable was well filled and admirably regulated. His stud was thoroughbred and in excellent order. His household books contain registers of the names, ages, and marks of his various horses; such as Ajax, Blueskin, Valiant, Magnolia (an Arab), &c. Also his dogs, chiefly fox-hounds, Vulcan, Singer, Ringwood, Sweetlips, Forrester, Music, Rockwood, Truelove, &c.[1]

A large Virginia estate, in those days, was a little empire. The mansion-house was the seat of government, with its numerous dependencies, such as kitchens, smoke-houses, workshops, and stables. In this mansion the planter ruled supreme; his steward or overseer was his prime minister and executive officer; he had his legion of house negroes for domestic service, and his host of field negroes for the culture of tobacco, Indian corn, and other crops, and for other out of door labour. Their quarter formed a kind of hamlet apart, composed of various huts, with little gardens and poultry yards, all well stocked, and swarms of little negroes gambolling in the sunshine. Then there were large wooden edifices for curing tobacco, the staple and most profitable production, and mills for grinding wheat and Indian corn, of which large fields were cultivated for the supply of the family and the maintenance of the negroes.

Among the slaves were artificers of all kinds, tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, smiths, wheelwrights, and so forth; so that a plantation produced every thing within itself for ordinary use: as to articles of fashion and elegance, lux-

[1] In one of his letter-books we find orders on his London agent for riding equipments. For example:

1 Man's riding-saddle, hogskin seat, large plated stirrups and every thing complete. Double reined bridle and Pelham bit, plated.

A very neat and fashionable Newmarket saddle-cloth.

A large and best portmanteau, saddle, bridle, and pillion.

Cloak-bag surcingle; checked saddle-cloth, holsters, &c.

A riding-frock of a handsome drab-coloured broadcloth, with plain double gilt buttons.

A riding waistcoat of superfine scarlet cloth and gold lace, with buttons like those of the coat.

A blue surtout coat.

A neat switch whip, silver cap.

Black velvet cap for servant.

uries, and expensive clothing, they were imported from London; for the planters on the main rivers, especially the Potomac, carried on an immediate trade with England. Their tobacco was put up by their own negroes, bore their own marks, was shipped on board of vessels which came up the rivers for the purpose, and consigned to some agent in Liverpool or Bristol, with whom the planter kept an account.

The Virginia planters were prone to leave the care of their estates too much to their overseers, and to think personal labour a degradation. Washington carried into his rural affairs the same method, activity, and circumspection that had distinguished him in military life. He kept his own accounts, posted up his books and balanced them with mercantile exactness. We have examined them as well as his diaries recording his daily occupations, and his letter-books, containing entries of shipments of tobacco, and correspondence with his London agents. They are monuments of his business habits.[2]

The products of his estate also became so noted for the faithfulness, as to quality and quantity, with which they were put up, that it is said any barrel of flour that bore the brand of George Washington, Mount Vernon, was exempted from the customary inspection in the West India ports.[3]

He was an early riser, often before daybreak in the winter when the nights were long. On such occasions he lit

[2] The following letter of Washington to his London correspondent will give an idea of the early intercourse of the Virginia planters with the mother country.

"Our goods by the Liberty, Captain Walker, came to hand in good order and soon after his arrival, as they generally do when shipped in a vessel to this river [the Potomac], and scarce ever when they go to any others; for it don't often happen that a vessel bound to one river has goods of any consequence to another; and the masters, in these cases, keep the packages till an accidental conveyance offers, and for want of better opportunities frequently commit them to boatmen who care very little for the goods so they get their freight, and often land them wherever it suits their convenience, not where they have engaged to do so * * * * A ship from London to Virginia may be in Rappahannock or any of the other rivers three months before I know any thing of their arrival, and may make twenty voyages without my seeing or even hearing of the captain."

[3] Speech of the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop on laying the corner-stone of Washington's Monument.

his own fire and wrote or read by candle-light. He breakfasted at seven in summer, at eight in winter. Two small cups of tea and three or four cakes of Indian meal (called hoe cakes), formed his frugal repast. Immediately after breakfast he mounted his horse and visited those parts of the estate where any work was going on, seeing to everything with his own eyes, and often aiding with his own hand.

Dinner was served at two o'clock. He ate heartily, but was no epicure, nor critical about his food. His beverage was small beer or cider, and two glasses of old Madeira. He took tea, of which he was very fond, early in the evening, and retired for the night about nine o'clock.

If confined to the house by bad weather, he took that occasion to arrange his papers, post up his accounts, or write letters; passing part of the time in reading, and occasionally reading aloud to the family.

He treated his negroes with kindness; attended to their comforts; was particularly careful of them in sickness; but never tolerated idleness, and exacted a faithful performance of their allotted tasks. He had a quick eye at calculating each man's capabilities. An entry in his diary gives a curious instance of this. Four of his negroes, employed as carpenters, were hewing and shaping timber. It appeared to him, in noticing the amount of work accomplished between two succeeding mornings, that they loitered at their labour. Sitting down quietly he timed their operations; how long it took them to get their cross-cut saw and other implements ready; how long to clear away the branches from the trunk of a fallen tree; how long to hew and saw it; what time was expended in considering and consulting, and after all, how much work was effected during the time he looked on. From this he made his computation how much they could execute in the course of a day, working entirely at their ease.

At another time we find him working for a part of two days with Peter, his smith, to make a plough on a new invention of his own. This, after two or three failures, he accomplished. Then, with less than his usual judgment, he put his two chariot horses to the plough, and ran a great risk of spoiling them, in giving his new invention a trial over ground thickly swarded.

Anon, during a thunder-storm, a frightened negro alarms the house with word that the mill is giving way, upon which there is a general turn out of all the forces, with Washington at their head, wheeling and shovelling gravel, during a pelting rain, to check the rushing water.

Washington delighted in the chase. In the hunting season, when he rode out early in the morning to visit distant parts of the estate, where work was going on, he often took some of the dogs with him for the chance of starting a fox, which he occasionally did, though he was not always successful in killing him. He was a bold rider and an admirable horseman, though he never claimed the merit of being an accomplished fox-hunter. In the height of the season, however, he would be out with the fox-hounds two or three times a-week, accompanied by his guests at Mount Vernon and the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, especially the Fairfaxes of Belvoir, of which estate his friend George William Fairfax was now the proprietor. On such occasions there would be a hunting dinner at one or other of those establishments, at which convivial repasts Washington is said to have enjoyed himself with unwonted hilarity.

Now and then his old friend and instructor in the noble art of venery, Lord Fairfax, would be on a visit to his relatives at Belvoir, and then the hunting was kept up with unusual spirit.[4]

His lordship, however, since the alarms of Indian war had ceased, lived almost entirely at Greenway Court, where Washington was occasionally a guest, when called by public business to Winchester. Lord Fairfax had made himself a favourite throughout the neighbourhood. As lord-lieutenant and custos rotulorum of Frederick County, he

[4] Hunting memoranda from Washington's Journal, Mount Vernon.

Nov. 22.—Hunting with Lord Fairfax and his brother, and Colonel Fairfax.

Nov. 25.—Mr. Bryan Fairfax, Mr. Grayson, and Phil. Alexander came here by sunrise. Hunted and catched a fox with these, Lord Fairfax, his brother, and Col. Fairfax,—all of whom, with Mr. Fairfax and Mr. Wilson of England, dined here. 26th and 29th.—Hunted again with the same company.

Dec. 5.—Fox-hunting with Lord Fairfax and his brother, and Colonel Fairfax. Started a fox and lost it. Dined at Belvoir, and returned in the evening.

presided at county courts held at Winchester, where, during the sessions, he kept open table. He acted also as surveyor and overseer of the public roads and highways, and was unremitted in his exertions and plans for the improvement of the country. Hunting, however, was his passion. When the sport was poor near home, he would take his hounds to a distant part of the country, establish himself at an inn, and keep open house and open table to every person of good character and respectable appearance who chose to join him in following the hounds.

It was probably in quest of sport of the kind that he now and then, in the hunting season, revisited his old haunts and former companions on the banks of the Potomac, and then the beautiful woodland region about Belvoir and Mount Vernon was sure to ring at early morn with the inspiring music of the hound.

The waters of the Potomac also afforded occasional amusement in fishing and shooting. The fishing was sometimes on a grand scale, when the herrings came up the river in shoals, and the negroes of Mount Vernon were marshalled forth to draw the seine, which was generally done with great success. Canvas-back ducks abounded at the proper season, and the shooting of them was one of Washington's favourite recreations. The river border of his domain, however, was somewhat subject to invasion. An oysterman once anchored his craft at the landing-place, and disturbed the quiet of the neighbourhood by the insolent and disorderly conduct of himself and crew. It took a campaign of three days to expel these invaders from the premises.

A more summary course was pursued with another interloper. This was a vagabond who infested the creeks and inlets which bordered the estate, lurking in a canoe among the reeds and bushes, and making great havoc among the canvas-back ducks. He had been warned off repeatedly, but without effect. As Washington was one day riding about the estate he heard the report of a gun from the margin of the river. Spurring in that direction he dashed through the bushes, and came upon the culprit just as he was pushing his canoe from shore. The latter raised his gun with a menacing look; but Washington rode into the stream, seized the painter of the canoe, drew it to shore,

sprang from his horse, wrested the gun from the hands of the astonished delinquent, and inflicted on him a lesson in "Lynch law" that effectually cured him of all inclination to trespass again on these forbidden shores.

The Potomac, in the palmy days of Virginia, was occasionally the scene of a little aquatic state and ostentation among the rich planters who resided on its banks. They had beautiful barges, which, like their land equipages, were imported from England; and mention is made of a Mr. Digges who always received Washington in his barge, rowed by six negroes, arrayed in a kind of uniform of check shirts and black velvet caps. At one time, according to notes in Washington's diary, the whole neighbourhood is thrown into a paroxysm of festivity, by the anchoring of a British frigate (the 'Boston') in the river, just in front of the hospitable mansion of the Fairfaxes. A succession of dinners and breakfasts takes place at Mount Vernon and Belvoir, with occasional tea parties on board of the frigate. The commander, Sir Thomas Adams, his officers, and his midshipmen, are cherished guests, and have the freedom of both establishments.

Occasionally he and Mrs. Washington would pay a visit to Annapolis, at that time the seat of government of Maryland, and partake of the gaieties which prevailed during the session of the legislature. The society of these seats of provincial governments was always polite and fashionable, and more exclusive than in these republican days, being, in a manner the outposts of the English aristocracy, where all places of dignity or profit were secured for younger sons, and poor, but proud relatives. During the session of the legislature, dinners and balls abounded, and there were occasional attempts at theatricals. The latter was an amusement for which Washington always had a relish, though he never had an opportunity of gratifying it effectually. Neither was he disinclined to mingle in the dance, and we remember to have heard venerable ladies, who had been belles in his day, pride themselves on having had him for a partner, though, they added, he was apt to be a ceremonious and grave one.[5]

[5] We have had an amusing picture of Annapolis as it was at this period, furnished to us some years since by an octogenarian who had

In this round of rural occupation, rural amusements, and social intercourse, Washington passed several tranquil years, the halcyon season of his life. His already established reputation drew many visitors to Mount Vernon; some of his early companions in arms were his occasional guests, and his friendships and connections linked him with some of the most prominent and worthy people of the country, who were sure to be received with cordial, but simple and unpretending hospitality. His marriage was unblessed with children; but those of Mrs. Washington experienced from him parental care and affection, and the formation of their minds and manners was one of the dearest objects of his attention. His domestic concerns and social enjoyments, however, were not permitted to interfere with his public duties. He was active by nature, and eminently a man of business by habit. As judge of the county court, and member of the House of Burgesses, he had numerous calls upon his time and thoughts, and was often drawn from home; for whatever trust he undertook, he was sure to fulfil with scrupulous exactness.

About this time we find him engaged, with other men of enterprise, in a project to drain the great Dismal Swamp, and render it capable of cultivation. This vast morass was about thirty miles long, and ten miles wide, and its interior but little known. With his usual zeal and hardihood he explored it on horseback and on foot. In many parts it was covered with dark and gloomy woods of cedar, cypress, and hemlock, or deciduous trees, the branches of which were hung with long drooping moss. Other parts were almost inaccessible from the density of brakes and thickets, entangled with vines, briers, and creeping plants, and intersected by creeks and standing pools. Occasionally the

resided there in his boyhood. "In those parts of the country," said he, "where the roads were too rough for carriages, the ladies used to ride on ponies, followed by black servants on horseback; in this way his mother, then advanced in life, used to travel, in a scarlet cloth riding habit, which she had procured from England. Nay, in this way, on emergencies," he added, "the young ladies from the country used to come to the balls at Annapolis, riding with their hoops arranged 'fore and aft' like lateen sails; and after dancing all night, would ride home again in the morning."

soil, composed of dead vegetable fibre, was over his horse's fetlocks, and sometimes he had to dismount and make his way on foot over a quaking bog that shook beneath his tread.

In the centre of the morass he came to a great piece of water, six miles long, and three broad, called Drummond's Pond, but more poetically celebrated as the Lake of the Dismal Swamp. It was more elevated than any other part of the swamp, and capable of feeding canals, by which the whole might be traversed. Having made the circuit of it, and noted all its characteristics, he encamped for the night upon the firm land which bordered it, and finished his explorations on the following day.

In the ensuing session of the Virginia legislature, the association in behalf of which he had acted, was chartered under the name of the Dismal Swamp Company; and to his observations and forecast may be traced the subsequent improvement and prosperity of that once desolate region.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Treaty of Peace—Pontiac's War—Course of Public Events—Board of Trade against Paper Currency—Restrictive policy of England—Navigation Laws—Discontents in New England—Of the other Colonies—Projects to raise Revenue by Taxation—Blow at the Independence of the Judiciary—Naval Commanders employed as Custom-House Officers—Retaliation of the Colonists—Taxation resisted in Boston—Passing of the Stamp Act—Burst of Opposition in Virginia—Speech of Patrick Henry.

Tidings of peace gladdened the colonies in the spring of 1763. The definitive treaty between England and France had been signed at Fontainbleau. Now, it was trusted, there would be an end to those horrid ravages that had desolated the interior of the country. "The desert and the silent place would rejoice, and the wilderness would blossom like the rose."

The month of May proved the fallacy of such hopes. In that month the famous insurrection of the Indian tribes broke out, which, from the name of the chief who was its prime mover and master spirit, is commonly called Pontiac's war. The Delawares and Shawnees, and other of those

emigrant tribes of the Ohio, among whom Washington had mingled, were foremost in this conspiracy. Some of the chiefs who had been his allies, had now taken up the hatchet against the English. The plot was deep-laid, and conducted with Indian craft and secresy. At a concerted time an attack was made upon all the posts from Detroit to Fort Pitt (late Fort Duquesne). Several of the small stockaded forts, the places of refuge of woodland neighbourhoods, were surprised and sacked with remorseless butchery. The frontiers of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, were laid waste; traders in the wilderness were plundered and slain; hamlets and farmhouses were wrapped in flames, and their inhabitants massacred. Shingis, with his Delaware warriors, blockaded Fort Pitt, which, for some time, was in imminent danger. Detroit, also, came near falling into the hands of the savages. It needed all the influence of Sir William Johnson, that potentate in savage life, to keep the Six Nations from joining this formidable conspiracy; had they done so, the triumph of the tomahawk and scalping knife would have been complete; as it was, a considerable time elapsed before the frontier was restored to tolerable tranquillity.

Fortunately, Washington's retirement from the army prevented his being entangled in this savage war, which raged throughout the regions he had repeatedly visited, or rather his active spirit had been diverted into a more peaceful channel, for he was at this time occupied in the enterprise just noticed, for draining the great Dismal Swamp.

Public events were now taking a tendency which, without any political aspiration or forethought of his own, was destined gradually to bear him away from his quiet home and individual pursuits, and launch him upon a grander and wider sphere of action than any in which he had hitherto been engaged.

The prediction of the Duke de Choiseul was in the process of fulfilment. The recent war of Great Britain for dominion in America, though crowned with success, had engendered a progeny of discontents in her colonies. Washington was among the first to perceive its bitter fruits. British merchants had complained loudly of losses sustained by the depreciation of the colonial paper, issued

during the late war, in times of emergency, and had addressed a memorial on the subject to the Board of Trade. Scarce was peace concluded, when an order from the board declared that no paper, issued by colonial assemblies, should thenceforward be a legal tender in the payment of debts. Washington deprecated this "stir of the merchants" as peculiarly ill-timed; and expressed an apprehension that the orders in question "would set the whole country in flames."

We do not profess, in this personal memoir, to enter into a wide scope of general history, but shall content ourselves with a glance at the circumstances and events which gradually kindled the conflagration thus apprehended by the anxious mind of Washington.

Whatever might be the natural affection of the colonies for the mother country,—and there are abundant evidences to prove that it was deep-rooted and strong,—it had never been properly reciprocated. They yearned to be considered as children; they were treated by her as changelings. Burke testifies that her policy toward them from the beginning had been purely commercial, and her commercial policy wholly restrictive. "It was the system of a monopoly."

Her navigation laws had shut their ports against foreign vessels; obliged them to export their productions only to countries belonging to the British crown; to import European goods solely from England, and in English ships; and had subjected the trade between the colonies to duties. All manufactures, too, in the colonies that might interfere with those of the mother country had been either totally prohibited, or subjected to intolerable restraints.

The acts of Parliament, imposing these prohibitions and restrictions, had at various times produced sore discontent and opposition on the part of the colonies, especially among those of New England. The interests of these last were chiefly commercial, and among them the republican spirit predominated. They had sprung into existence during that part of the reign of James I. when disputes ran high about kingly prerogative and popular privilege.

The Pilgrims, as they styled themselves, who founded Plymouth colony in 1620, had been incensed while in

England by what they stigmatized as the oppressions of the monarchy, and the established church. They had sought the wilds of America for the indulgence of freedom of opinion, and had brought with them the spirit of independence and self-government. Those who followed them in the reign of Charles I. were imbued with the same spirit, and gave a lasting character to the people of New England.

Other colonies, having been formed under other circumstances, might be inclined toward a monarchical government, and disposed to acquiesce in its exactions; but the republican spirit was ever alive in New England, watching over "natural and chartered rights," and prompt to defend them against any infringement. Its example and instigation had gradually an effect on the other colonies; a general impatience was evinced from time to time of parliamentary interference in colonial affairs, and a disposition in the various provincial legislatures to think and act for themselves in matters of civil and religious, as well as commercial polity.

There was nothing, however, to which the jealous sensibilities of the colonies were more alive than to any attempt of the mother country to draw a revenue from them by taxation. From the earliest period of their existence, they had maintained the principle that they could only be taxed by a legislature in which they were represented. Sir Robert Walpole, when at the head of the British government, was aware of their jealous sensibility on this point, and cautious of provoking it. When American taxation was suggested, "it must be a bolder man than himself," he replied, "and one less friendly to commerce, who should venture on such an expedient. For his part, he would encourage the trade of the colonies to the utmost; one half of the profits would be sure to come into the royal exchequer through the increased demand for British manufactures. *This*," said he, sagaciously, "*is taxing them more agreeably to their own constitution and laws.*"

Subsequent ministers adopted a widely different policy. During the progress of the French war, various projects were discussed in England with regard to the colonies,

which were to be carried into effect on the return of peace. The open avowal of some of these plans, and vague rumours of others, more than ever irritated the jealous feelings of the colonists, and put the dragon spirit of New England on the alert.

In 1760, there was an attempt in Boston to collect duties on foreign sugar and molasses imported into the colonies. Writs of assistance were applied for by the custom-house officers, authorizing them to break open ships, stores, and private dwellings, in quest of articles that had paid no duty; and to call the assistance of others in the discharge of their odious task. The merchants opposed the execution of the writ on constitutional grounds. The question was argued in court, where James Otis spoke so eloquently in vindication of American rights, that all his hearers went away ready to take arms against writs of assistance. "Then and there," says John Adams, who was present, "was the first scene of opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain. Then and there American Independence was born."

Another ministerial measure was to instruct the provincial governors to commission judges. Not as theretofore "during good behaviour," but "during the king's pleasure." New York was the first to resent this blow at the independence of the judiciary. The lawyers appealed to the public through the press against an act which subjected the halls of justice to the prerogative. Their appeals were felt beyond the bounds of the province, and awakened a general spirit of resistance.

Thus matters stood at the conclusion of the war. One of the first measures of ministers on the return of peace, was to enjoin on all naval officers stationed on the coast of the American colonies the performance, under oath, of the duties of custom-house officers, for the suppression of smuggling. This fell ruinously upon a clandestine trade which had long been connived at between the English and Spanish colonies, profitable to both, but especially to the former, and beneficial to the mother country, opening a market to her manufactures.

"Men-of-war," says Burke, "were for the first time armed with the regular commissions of custom-house

officers, invested the coasts, and gave the collection of revenue the air of hostile contribution. * * * They fell so indiscriminately on all sorts of contraband, or supposed contraband, that some of the most valuable branches of trade were driven violently from our ports, which caused an universal consternation throughout the colonies."[1]

As a measure of retaliation, the colonists resolved not to purchase British fabrics, but to clothe themselves as much as possible in home manufactures. The demand for British goods in Boston alone was diminished upwards of 10,000*l.* sterling in the course of a year.

In 1764, George Grenville, now at the head of government, ventured upon the policy from which Walpole had so wisely abstained. Early in March the eventful question was debated, "whether they had a right to tax America." It was decided in the affirmative. Next followed a resolution, declaring it proper to charge certain stamp duties in the colonies and plantations, but no immediate step was taken to carry it into effect. Mr. Grenville, however, gave notice to the American agents in London, that he should introduce such a measure on the ensuing session of Parliament. In the mean time Parliament perpetuated certain duties on sugar and molasses—heretofore subjects of complaint and opposition—now reduced and modified so as to discourage smuggling, and thereby to render them more productive. Duties, also, were imposed on other articles of foreign produce or manufacture imported into the colonies. To reconcile the latter to these impositions, it was stated that the revenue thus raised was to be appropriated to their protection and security; in other words, to the support of a standing army, intended to be quartered upon them.

We have here briefly stated but a part of what Burke terms an "infinite variety of paper chains," extending through no less than twenty-nine acts of Parliament, from 1660 to 1764, by which the colonies had been held in thraldom.

The New Englanders were the first to take the field against the project of taxation. They denounced it as a

[1] Burke on the State of the Nation.

violation of their rights as freemen; of their chartered rights, by which they were to tax themselves for their support and defence; of their rights as British subjects, who ought not to be taxed but by themselves or their representatives. They sent petitions and remonstrances on the subject to the king, the lords and the commons, in which they were seconded by New York and Virginia. Franklin appeared in London at the head of agents from Pennsylvania, Connecticut and South Carolina, to deprecate, in person, measures so fraught with mischief. The most eloquent arguments were used by British orators and statesmen to dissuade Grenville from enforcing them. He was warned of the sturdy independence of the colonists, and the spirit of resistance he might provoke. All was in vain. Grenville, "great in daring and little in views," says Horace Walpole, "was charmed to have an untrodden field before him of calculation and experiment." In March, 1765, the act was passed, according to which all instruments in writing were to be executed on stamped paper, to be purchased from the agents of the British government. What was more: all offences against the act could be tried in any royal, marine, or admiralty court throughout the colonies, however distant from the place where the offence had been committed; thus interfering with that most inestimable right, a trial by jury.

It was an ominous sign that the first burst of opposition to this act should take place in Virginia. That colony had hitherto been slow to accord with the republican spirit of New England. Founded at an earlier period of the reign of James I., before kingly prerogative and ecclesiastical supremacy had been made matters of doubt and fierce dispute, it had grown up in loyal attachment to king, church, and constitution; was aristocratical in its tastes and habits, and had been remarked above all the other colonies for its sympathies with the mother country. Moreover, it had not so many pecuniary interests involved in these questions as had the people of New England, being an agricultural rather than a commercial province; but the Virginians are of a quick and generous spirit, readily aroused on all points of honourable pride, and they resented the stamp act as an outrage on their rights.

Washington occupied his seat in the House of Burgesses, when, on the 29th of May, the stamp act became a subject of discussion. We have seen no previous opinions of his on the subject. His correspondence hitherto had not turned on political or speculative themes; being engrossed by either military or agricultural matters, and evincing little anticipation of the vortex of public duties into which he was about to be drawn. All his previous conduct and writings show a loyal devotion to the crown, with a patriotic attachment to his country. It is probable that on the present occasion that latent patriotism received its first electric shock.

Among the burgesses sat Patrick Henry, a young lawyer, who had recently distinguished himself by pleading against the exercise of the royal prerogative in church matters, and who was now for the first time a member of the House. Rising in his place, he introduced his celebrated resolutions, declaring that the General Assembly of Virginia had the exclusive right and power to lay taxes and impositions upon the inhabitants, and that whoever maintained the contrary should be deemed an enemy to the colony.

The speaker, Mr Robinson, objected to the resolutions, as inflammatory. Henry vindicated them, as justified by the nature of the case; went into an able and constitutional discussion of colonial rights, and an eloquent exposition of the manner in which they had been assailed; wound up by one of those daring flights of declamation for which he was remarkable, and startled the House by a warning flash from history: "Cæsar had his Brutus; Charles his Cromwell; and George the Third—('Treason! treason!' resounded from the neighbourhood of the Chair)—may profit by their examples," added Henry. "Sir, if this be treason (bowing to the speaker), make the most of it!"

The resolutions were modified, to accommodate them to the scruples of the speaker and some of the members, but their spirit was retained. The lieutenant-governor (Fauquier), startled by this patriotic outbreak, dissolved the Assembly, and issued writs for a new election; but the clarion had sounded. "The resolves of the Assembly of Virginia," says a correspondent of the ministry, "gave the

signal for a general outcry over the continent. The movers and supporters of them were applauded as the protectors and assertors of American liberty."[2]

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Washington's Ideas concerning the Stamp Act—Opposition to it in the Colonies—Portentous Ceremonies at Boston and New York—Non-Importation Agreement among the Merchants—Washington and George Mason—Dismissal of Grenville from the British Cabinet—Franklin before the House of Commons—Repeal of the Stamp Act—Joy of Washington—Fresh Causes of Colonial Dissensions—Circular of the General Court of Massachusetts—Embarkation of Troops for Boston—Measures of the Bostonians.

WASHINGTON returned to Mount Vernon full of anxious thoughts inspired by the political events of the day, and the legislative scene which he witnessed. His recent letters had spoken of the state of peaceful tranquillity in which he was living; those now written from his rural home show that he fully participated in the popular feeling, and that while he had a presentiment of an arduous struggle, his patriotic mind was revolving means of coping with it. Such is the tenor of a letter written to his wife's uncle, Francis Dandridge, then in London. "The stamp act," said he, "engrosses the conversation of the speculative part of the colonists, who look upon this unconstitutional method of taxation as a direful attack upon their liberties, and loudly exclaim against the violation. What may be the result of this and of some other (I think I may add ill-judged) measures, I will not undertake to determine; but this I may venture to affirm, that the advantage accruing to the mother country will fall greatly short of the expectation of the ministry; for certain it is, that our whole substance already in a manner flows to Great Britain, and that whatsoever contributes to lessen our importations must be hurtful to her manufactures. The eyes of our people already begin to be opened; and they will perceive, that many luxuries, for which we lavish our substance in Great Britain, can well be dispensed with. This, conse-

[2] Letter to Secretary Conway, New York, Sept. 23.—*Parliamentary Register.*

quently, will introduce frugality, and be a necessary incitement to industry. * * * * * * As to the stamp act, regarded in a single view, one of the first bad consequences attending it, is, that our courts of judicature must inevitably be shut up; for it is impossible, or next to impossible, under our present circumstances, that the act of Parliament can be complied with, were we ever so willing to enforce its execution. And not to say (which alone would be sufficient) that we have not money enough to pay for the stamps, there are many other cogent reasons which prove that it would be ineffectual."

A letter of the same date to his agents in London, of ample length and minute in all its details, shows that while deeply interested in the course of public affairs, his practical mind was enabled thoroughly and ably to manage the financial concerns of his estate, and of the estate of Mrs. Washington's son, John Parke Custis, towards whom he acted the part of a faithful and affectionate guardian. In those days Virginia planters were still in direct and frequent correspondence with their London factors; and Washington's letters respecting his shipments of tobacco, and the returns required in various articles for household and personal use are perfect models for a man of business. And this may be remarked throughout his whole career, that no pressure of events nor multiplicity of cares prevented a clear, steadfast, under-current of attention to domestic affairs, and the interest and well-being of all dependent upon him.

In the mean time, from his quiet abode at Mount Vernon, he seemed to hear the patriotic voice of Patrick Henry, which had startled the House of Burgesses, echoing throughout the land, and rousing one legislative body after another to follow the example of that of Virginia. At the instigation of the General Court or Assembly of Massachusetts, a Congress was held in New York in October, composed of delegates from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina. In this they denounced the acts of Parliament imposing taxes on them without their consent, and extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty as violations of their rights and

liberties as natural born subjects of Great Britain, and prepared an address to the king, and a petition to both Houses of Parliament, praying for redress. Similar petitions were forwarded to England by the colonies not represented in the Congress.

The very preparations for enforcing the stamp act called forth popular tumults in various places. In Boston the stamp distributor was hanged in effigy; his windows were broken; a house intended for a stamp office was pulled down, and the effigy burnt in a bonfire made of the fragments. The lieutenant-governor, chief justice, and sheriff, attempting to allay the tumult, were pelted. The stamp officer thought himself happy to be hanged merely in effigy, and next day publicly renounced the perilous office.

Various were the proceedings in other places, all manifesting public scorn and defiance of the act. In Virginia, Mr. George Mercer had been appointed distributor of stamps, but on his arrival at Williamsburg publicly declined officiating. It was a fresh triumph to the popular cause. The bells were rung for joy; the town was illuminated, and Mercer was hailed with acclamations of the people.[1]

The 1st of November, the day when the act was to go into operation, was ushered in with portentous solemnities. There was great tolling of bells and burning of effigies in the New England colonies. At Boston the ships displayed their colours but half-mast high. Many shops were shut; funeral knells resounded from the steeples, and there was a grand auto-da-fe, in which the promoters of the act were paraded and suffered martyrdom in effigy.

At New York the printed act was carried about the streets on a pole, surmounted by a death's head, with a scroll bearing the inscription, "The folly of England and ruin of America." Colden, the lieutenant-governor, who acquired considerable odium by recommending to government the taxation of the colonies, the institution of hereditary assemblies, and other Tory measures, seeing that a popular storm was rising, retired into the fort, taking with him the stamp papers, and garrisoned it with marines from a ship of war.

[1] Holme's Annals, vol. ii., p. 138.

The mob broke into his stable, drew out his chariot, put his effigy into it, paraded it through the streets to the common (now the Park), where they hung it on a gallows. In the evening it was taken down, put again into the chariot, with the devil for a companion, and escorted back by torch-light to the Bowling Green; where the whole pageant, chariot and all, was burnt under the very guns of the fort.

These are specimens of the marks of popular reprobation with which the stamp act was universally nullified. No one would venture to carry it into execution. In fact no stamped paper was to be seen; all had been either destroyed or concealed. All transactions which required stamps to give them validity were suspended, or were executed by private compact. The courts of justice were closed, until at length some conducted their business without stamps. Union was becoming the watch-word. The merchants of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and such other colonies as had ventured publicly to oppose the stamp act, agreed to import no more British manufactures after the 1st of January unless it should be repealed. So passed away the year 1765.

As yet Washington took no prominent part in the public agitation. Indeed he was never disposed to put himself forward on popular occasions, his innate modesty forbade it; it was others who knew his worth that called him forth; but when once he engaged in any public measure, he devoted himself to it with consciousness and persevering zeal. At present he remained a quiet but vigilant observer of events from his eagle nest at Mount Vernon. He had some few intimates in his neighbourhood who accorded with him in sentiment. One of the ablest and most efficient of these was Mr. George Mason, with whom he had occasional conversations on the state of affairs. His friends the Fairfaxes, though liberal in feelings and opinions, were too strong in their devotion to the crown not to regard with an uneasy eye the tendency of the popular bias. From one motive or other, the earnest attention of all the inmates and visitors at Mount Vernon, were turned to England, watching the movements of the ministry.

The dismissal of Mr. Grenville from the cabinet gave a temporary change to public affairs. Perhaps nothing had

a greater effect in favour of the colonies than an examination of Dr. Franklin before the House of Commons, on the subject of the stamp act.

"What," he was asked, "was the temper of America towards Great Britain, before the year 1763?"

"The best in the world. They submitted willingly to the government of the crown, and paid, in all their courts, obedience to the acts of Parliament. Numerous as the people are in the several old provinces, they cost you nothing in forts, citadels, garrisons, or armies, to keep them in subjection. They were governed by this country at the expense only of a little pen, ink, and paper. They were led by a thread. They had not only a respect, but an affection for Great Britain, for its laws, its customs, and manners, and even a fondness for its fashions, that greatly increased the commerce. Natives of Great Britain, were always treated with particular regard; as to be an Old-England man was, of itself, a character of some respect, and gave a kind of rank among us."

"And what is their temper now?"

"Oh! very much altered."

"If the act is not repealed, what do you think will be the consequences?"

"A total loss of the respect and affection the people of America bear to this country, and of all the commerce that depends on that respect and affection."

"Do you think the people of America would submit to pay the stamp duty if it was moderated?"

"No, never, unless compelled by force of arms."[2]

The act was repealed on the 18th of March, 1766, to the great joy of the sincere friends of both countries, and to no one more than to Washington. In one of his letters he observes: "Had the Parliament of Great Britain resolved upon enforcing it, the consequences, I conceive, would have been more direful than is generally apprehended, both to the mother country and her colonies. All, therefore, who were instrumental in procuring the repeal, are entitled to the thanks of every British subject, and have mine cordially."[3]

[2] Parliamentary Register, 1766.

[3] Sparks. Writings of Washington, ii., 345, note.

Still, there was a fatal clause in the repeal, which declared that the king, with the consent of Parliament, had power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to "bind the colonies, and people of America, in all cases whatsoever."

As the people of America were contending for principles, not mere pecuniary interests, this reserved power of the crown and Parliament left the dispute still open, and chilled the feeling of gratitude which the repeal might otherwise have inspired. Further aliment for public discontent was furnished by other acts of Parliament. One imposed duties on glass, pasteboard, white and red lead, painters' colours, and tea; the duties to be collected on the arrival of the articles in the colonies; another empowered naval officers to enforce the acts of trade and navigation. Another wounded to the quick the pride and sensibilities of New York. The mutiny act had recently been extended to America, with an additional clause, requiring the provincial Assemblies to provide the troops sent out with quarters, and to furnish them with fire, beds, candles, and other necessaries, at the expense of the colonies. The Governor and Assembly of New York refused to comply with this requisition as to stationary forces, insisting that it applied only to troops on a march. An act of Parliament now suspended the powers of the Governor and Assembly until they should comply. Chatham attributed this opposition of the colonists to the mutiny act to "their jealousy of being somehow or other taxed internally by the Parliament; the act," said he, "asserting the right of Parliament, has certainly spread a most unfortunate jealousy and diffidence of government here throughout America, and makes them jealous of the least distinction between this country and that, lest the same principle may be extended to taxing them."[4]

Boston continued to be the focus of what the ministerialists termed sedition. The General Court of Massachusetts, not content with petitioning the king for relief against the recent measures of Parliament, especially those imposing taxes as a means of revenue, drew up a circular,

[4] Chatham's Correspondence, vol. iii., p. 189–192.

calling on the other colonial legislatures to join with them in suitable efforts to obtain redress. In the ensuing session, Governor Sir Francis Bernard called upon them to rescind the resolution on which the circular was founded; they refused to comply, and the General Court was consequently dissolved. The governors of other colonies required of their legislatures an assurance that they would not reply to the Massachusetts circular; these legislatures likewise refused compliance, and were dissolved. All this added to the growing excitement.

Memorials were addressed to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and remonstrances to the House of Commons, against taxation for revenue, as destructive to the liberties of the colonists; and against the act suspending the legislative power of the province of New York, as menacing the welfare of the colonies in general.

Nothing, however, produced a more powerful effect upon the public sensibilities throughout the country, than certain military demonstrations at Boston. In consequence of repeated collisions between the people of that place and the commissioners of customs, two regiments were held in readiness in Halifax to embark for Boston, in the ships of Commodore Hood, whenever Governor Bernard, or the general, should give the word. "Had this force been landed in Boston six months ago," writes the commodore, "I am perfectly persuaded no address or remonstrances would have been sent from the other colonies, and that all would have been tolerably quiet and orderly at this time throughout America."[5]

Tidings reached Boston that these troops were embarked, and that they were coming to overawe the people. What was to be done? The General Court had been dissolved, and the governor refused to convene it without the royal command. A convention, therefore, from various towns met at Boston, on the 22nd of September, to devise measures for the public safety, but disclaiming all pretensions to legislative powers. While the convention was yet in session (September 28th), the two regiments arrived, with seven armed vessels. "I am very confident," writes Com-

[5] Grenville Papers, vol. iv., p. 362.

modore Hood from Halifax, "the spirited measures now pursuing will soon effect order in America."

On the contrary, these "spirited measures" added fuel to the fire they were intended to quench. It was resolved, in a town meeting, that the king had no right to send troops thither without the consent of the Assembly; that Great Britain had broken the original compact, and that, therefore, the king's officers had no longer any business there.[e]

The "selectmen" accordingly refused to find quarters for the soldiers in the town; the council refused to find barracks for them, lest it should be construed into a compliance with the disputed clause of the mutiny act. Some of the troops, therefore, which had tents, were encamped on the common; others, by the governor's orders, were quartered in the state-house, and others in Faneuil Hall, to the great indignation of the public, who were grievously scandalized at seeing field-pieces planted in front of the state-house; sentinels stationed at the doors, challenging every one who passed; and, above all, at having the sacred quiet of the Sabbath disturbed by drum and fife, and other military music.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Cheerful Life at Mount Vernon—Washington and George Mason—Correspondence concerning the Non-Importation Agreement—Feeling toward England—Opening of the Legislative Session—Semi-Regal State of Lord Botetourt—High-toned Proceedings of the House—Sympathy with New England—Dissolved by Lord Botetourt—Washington and the Articles of Association.

Throughout these public agitations, Washington endeavoured to preserve his equanimity. Removed from the heated throngs of cities, his diary denotes a cheerful and healthful life at Mount Vernon, devoted to those rural occupations in which he delighted, and varied occasionally by his favourite field-sports. Sometimes he is duck-shooting on the Potomac. Repeatedly we find note of his being out at sunrise with the hounds, in company with old Lord

[e] Whately to Grenville. Grenv. Papers, vol. iv., p. 389.

Fairfax, Bryan Fairfax, and others; and ending the day's sport by a dinner at Mount Vernon or Belvoir.

Still he was too true a patriot not to sympathize in the struggle for colonial rights which now agitated the whole country, and we find him gradually carried more and more into the current of political affairs.

A letter written on the 5th of April, 1769, to his friend, George Mason, shows the important stand he was disposed to take. In the previous year, the merchants and traders of Boston, Salem, Connecticut, and New York had agreed to suspend for a time the importation of all articles subject to taxation. Similar resolutions had recently been adopted by the merchants of Philadelphia. Washington's letter is emphatic in support of the measure. "At a time," writes he, "when our lordly masters in Great Britain will be satisfied with nothing less than the deprivation of American freedom, it seems highly necessary that something should be done to avert the stroke, and maintain the liberty which we have derived from our ancestors. But the manner of doing it, to answer the purpose effectually, is the point in question. That no man should scruple, or hesitate a moment, in defence of so valuable a blessing, is clearly my opinion; yet arms should be the last resource—the *dernier ressort.* We have already, it is said, proved the inefficacy of addresses to the throne and remonstrances to Parliament. How far their attention to our rights and interests is to be awakened or alarmed, by starving their trade and manufactures, remains to be tried.

"The northern colonies, it appears, are endeavouring to adopt this scheme. In my opinion, it is a good one, and must be attended with salutary effects, provided it can be carried pretty generally into execution. * * * * That there will be a difficulty attending it everywhere, from clashing interests, and selfish, designing men, ever attentive to their own gain, and watchful of every turn that can assist their lucrative views, cannot be denied; and in the tobacco colonies, where the trade is so diffused, and in a manner wholly conducted by factors for their principals at home, these difficulties are certainly enhanced, but I think not insurmountably increased, if the gentlemen in their several counties will be at some pains to explain

matters to the people, and stimulate them to cordial agreements to purchase none but certain enumerated articles out of any of the stores, after a definite period, and neither import nor purchase any themselves. * * * I can see but one class of people, the merchants excepted, who will not, or ought not, to wish well to the scheme, namely, they who live genteelly and hospitably on clear estates. Such as these, were they not to consider the valuable object in view, and the good of others, might think it hard to be curtailed in their living and enjoyments."

This was precisely the class to which Washington belonged; but he was ready and willing to make the sacrifices required. "I think the scheme a good one," added he, "and that it ought to be tried here, with such alterations as our circumstances render absolutely necessary."

Mason, in his reply, concurred with him in opinion. "Our all is at stake," said he, "and the little conveniences and comforts of life, when set in competition with our liberty, ought to be rejected, not with reluctance, but with pleasure. Yet it is plain that, in the tobacco colonies, we cannot at present confine our importations within such narrow bounds as the northern colonies. A plan of this kind, to be practicable, must be adapted to our circumstances; for if not steadily executed, it had better have remained unattempted. We may retrench all manner of superfluities, finery of all descriptions, and confine ourselves to linens, woollens, &c., not exceeding a certain price. It is amazing how much this practice, if adopted in all the colonies, would lessen the American imports and distress the various trades and manufactures of Great Britain. This would awaken their attention. They would see, they would feel, the oppressions we groan under, and exert themselves to procure us redress. This once obtained, we should no longer discontinue our importations, confining ourselves still not to import any article that should hereafter be taxed by act of Parliament for raising a revenue in America; for, however singular I may be in the opinion, *I am thoroughly convinced that, justice and harmony happily restored, it is not the interest of these colonies to refuse British manufactures. Our supplying our mother country with gross materials, and taking her manufactures in return, is the true*

chain of connexion between us. These are the bands which, if not broken by oppression, must long hold us together, by maintaining a constant reciprocation of interest."

The latter part of the above quotation shows the spirit which actuated Washington and the friends of his confidence; as yet there was no thought nor desire of alienation from the mother country, but only a fixed determination to be placed on an equality of rights and privileges with her other children.

A single word in the passage cited from Washington's letter evinces the chord which still vibrated in the American bosom: he incidentally speaks of England as *home*. It was the familiar term with which she was usually indicated by those of English descent; and the writer of these pages remembers when the endearing phrase still lingered on Anglo-American lips even after the Revolution. How easy would it have been before that era for the mother country to have rallied back the affections of her colonial children by a proper attention to their complaints. They asked for nothing but what they were entitled to, and what she had taught them to prize as their dearest inheritance. The spirit of liberty which they manifested had been derived from her own precept and example.

The result of the correspondence between Washington and Mason was the draft by the latter of a plan of association, the members of which were to pledge themselves not to import or use any articles of British merchandise or manufacture subject to duty. This paper Washington was to submit to the consideration of the House of Burgesses at the approaching session in the month of May.

The legislature of Virginia opened on this occasion with a brilliant pageant. While military force was arrayed to overawe the republican Puritans of the east, it was thought to dazzle the aristocratical descendants of the Cavaliers by the reflex of regal splendour. Lord Botetourt, one of the king's lords of the bed-chamber, had recently come out as governor of the province. Junius described him as "a cringing, bowing, fawning, sword-bearing courtier." Horace Walpole predicted that he would turn the heads of the Virginians in one way or other. "If his

graces do not captivate them he will enrage them to fury; for I take all his *douceur* to be enamelled on iron."[1] The words of political satirists and court wits, however, are always to be taken with great distrust. However his lordship may have bowed in presence of royalty, he elsewhere conducted himself with dignity, and won general favour by his endearing manners. He certainly showed promptness of spirit in his reply to the king on being informed of his appointment. "When will you be ready to go?" asked George III. "To-night, sir."

He had come out, however, with a wrong idea of the Americans. They had been represented to him as factious, immoral, and prone to sedition; but vain and luxurious, and easily captivated by parade and splendour. The latter foibles were aimed at in his appointment and fitting out. It was supposed that his titled rank would have its effect. Then to prepare him for occasions of ceremony, a coach of state was presented to him by the king. He was allowed, moreover, the quantity of plate usually given to ambassadors, whereupon the joke was circulated that he was going "plenipo to the Cherokees."[2]

His opening of the session was in the style of the royal opening of Parliament. He proceeded in due parade from his dwelling to the capitol in his state coach, drawn by six milk-white horses. Having delivered his speech according to royal form, he returned home with the same pomp and circumstance.

The time had gone by, however, for such display to have the anticipated effect. The Virginian legislators penetrated the intention of this pompous ceremonial, and regarded it with a depreciating smile. Sterner matters occupied their thoughts; they had come prepared to battle for their rights, and their proceedings soon showed Lord Botetourt how much he had mistaken them. Spirited resolutions were passed, denouncing the recent act of Parliament imposing taxes; the power to do which, on the inhabitants of this colony, "was legally and constitutionally vested in the House of Burgesses, with consent of the council and of the king, or of his governor, for the

[1] Grenville Papers, iv., note to p. 330.
[2] Whately to Geo. Grenville. Grenville Papers.

time being." Copies of these resolutions were ordered to be forwarded by the speaker to the legislatures of the other colonies, with a request for their concurrence.

Other proceedings of the Burgesses showed their sympathy with their fellow-patriots of New England. A joint address of both Houses of Parliament had recently been made to the king, assuring him of their support in any further measures for the due execution of the laws in Massachusetts, and beseeching him that all persons charged with treason, or misprision of treason, committed within that colony since the 30th of December, 1767, might be sent to Great Britain for trial.

As Massachusetts had no General Assembly at this time, having been dissolved by government, the legislature of Virginia generously took up the cause. An address to the king was resolved on, stating that all trials for treason, or misprision of treason, or for any crime whatever committed by any person residing in a colony, ought to be in and before his Majesty's courts within said colony, and beseeching the king to avert from his loyal subjects those dangers and miseries which would ensue from seizing and carrying beyond sea any person residing in America suspected of any crime whatever, thereby depriving them of the inestimable privilege of being tried by a jury from the vicinage, as well as the liberty of producing witnesses on such trial.

Disdaining any further application to Parliament, the House ordered the speaker to transmit this address to the colonies' agent in England, with directions to cause it to be presented to the king, and afterwards to be printed and published in the English papers.

Lord Botetourt was astonished and dismayed when he heard of these high-toned proceedings. Repairing to the capitol on the following day at noon, he summoned the speaker and members to the council-chamber, and addressed them in the following words: "Mr. Speaker, and gentlemen of the House of Burgesses,—I have heard of your resolves, and augur ill of their effects. You have made it my duty to dissolve you, and you are dissolved accordingly."

The spirit conjured up by the late decrees of Parliament

was not so easily allayed. The Burgesses adjourned to a private house. Peyton Randolph, their late speaker, was elected moderator. Washington now brought forward a draft of the articles of association concerted between him and George Mason. They formed the groundwork of an instrument signed by all present, pledging themselves neither to import, nor use any goods, merchandize, or manufactures, taxed by Parliament to raise a revenue in America. This instrument was sent throughout the country for signature, and the scheme of non-importation, hitherto confined to a few northern colonies, was soon universally adopted. For his own part, Washington adhered to it rigorously throughout the year. The articles proscribed by it were never to be seen in his house, and his agent in London was enjoined to ship nothing to him while subject to taxation.

The popular ferment in Virginia was gradually allayed by the amiable and conciliatory conduct of Lord Botetourt. His lordship soon became aware of the erroneous notions with which he had entered upon office. His semi-royal equipage and state were laid aside; he examined into public grievances; became a strenuous advocate for the repeal of taxes; and, authorized by his despatches from the ministry, assured the public that such repeal would speedily take place. His assurance was received with implicit faith, and for a while Virginia was quieted.

CHAPTER XXX.

Hood at Boston—The General Court refuses to do business under Military sway—Resists the Billeting Act—Effect of the Non-Importation Association—Lord North promises—Duties revoked except on Tea—The Boston Massacre—Disuse of Tea—Conciliatory Conduct of Lord Botetourt—His Death.

"The worst is past, and the spirit of sedition broken," writes Hood to Grenville, early in the spring of 1769.[1] When the commodore wrote this his ships were in the harbour, and troops occupied the town, and he flattered himself that at length turbulent Boston was quelled. But

[1] Grenville Papers, vol. iii.

it only awaited its time to be seditious according to rule; there was always an irresistible "method in its madness."

In the month of May, the General Court, hitherto prorogued, met according to charter. A committee immediately waited on the governor, stating it was impossible to do business with dignity and freedom while the town was invested by sea and land, and a military guard was stationed at the state-house, with cannon pointed at the door; and they requested the governor, as his Majesty's representative, to have such forces removed out of the port and gates of the city during the session of the Assembly.

The governor replied that he had no authority over either the ships or troops. The court persisted in refusing to transact business while so circumstanced, and the governor was obliged to transfer the session to Cambridge. There he addressed a message to that body in July, requiring funds for the payment of the troops, and quarters for their accommodation. The Assembly, after ample discussion of past grievances, resolved that the establishment of a standing army in the colony in a time of peace was an invasion of natural rights; that a standing army was not known as a part of the British constitution, and that the sending an armed force to aid the civil authority was unprecedented, and highly dangerous to the people.

After waiting some days without receiving an answer to his message, the governor sent to know whether the Assembly would, or would not, make provision for the troops. In their reply, they followed the example of the legislature of New York, in commenting on the mutiny, or billeting act, and ended by declining to furnish funds for the purpose specified, "being incompatible with their own honour and interest, and their duty to their constituents." They were, in consequence, again prorogued, to meet in Boston on the 10th of January.

So stood affairs in Massachusetts. In the meantime, the non-importation associations, being generally observed throughout the colonies, produced the effect on British commerce which Washington had anticipated, and Parliament was incessantly importuned by petitions from British merchants, imploring its intervention to save them from ruin.

Early in 1770, an important change took place in the British cabinet. The Duke of Grafton suddenly resigned, and the reins of government passed into the hands of Lord North. He was a man of limited capacity, but a favourite of the king, and subservient to his narrow colonial policy. His administration, so eventful to America, commenced with an error. In the month of March, an act was passed, revoking all the duties laid in 1767, *excepting that on tea.* This single tax was continued, as he observed, "to maintain the parliamentary right of taxation,"—the very right which was the grand object of contest. In this, however, he was in fact yielding, against his better judgment, to the stubborn tenacity of the king.

He endeavoured to reconcile the opposition, and perhaps himself, to the measure, by plausible reasoning. An impost of three-pence on the pound could never, he alleged, be opposed by the colonists, unless they were determined to rebel against Great Britain. Besides, a duty on that article, payable in England, and amounting to nearly one shilling on the pound, was taken off on its exportation to America, so that the inhabitants of the colonies saved ninepence on the pound.

Here was the stumbling-block at the threshold of Lord North's administration. In vain the members of the opposition urged that this single exception, while it would produce no revenue, would keep alive the whole cause of contention; that so long as a single external duty was enforced, the colonies would consider their rights invaded, and would remain unappeased. Lord North was not to be convinced; or rather, he knew the royal will was inflexible, and he complied with its behests. "The properest time to exert our right of taxation," said he, "is when the right is refused. To temporize is to yield; and the authority of the mother country, if it is now unsupported, will be relinquished for ever: *a total repeal cannot be thought of, till America is prostrate at our feet.*"[2]

On the very day in which this ominous bill was passed in Parliament, a sinister occurrence took place in Boston. Some of the young men of the place insulted the military

[2] Holme's Amer. Annals, vol. ii., p. 173.

while under arms; the latter resented it; the young men, after a scuffle, were put to flight, and pursued. The alarm bells rang, — a mob assembled; the custom-house was threatened; the troops, in protecting it, were assailed with clubs and stones, and obliged to use their fire-arms, before the tumult could be quelled. Four of the populace were killed, and several wounded. The troops were now removed from the town, which remained in the highest state of exasperation; and this untoward occurrence received the opprobrious and somewhat extravagant name of "the Boston massacre."

The colonists, as a matter of convenience, resumed the consumption of those articles on which the duties had been repealed; but continued, on principle, the rigorous disuse of tea, excepting such as had been smuggled in. New England was particularly earnest in the matter; many of the inhabitants, in the spirit of their Puritan progenitors, made a covenant to drink no more of the forbidden beverage, until the duty on tea should be repealed.

In Virginia the public discontents, which had been allayed by the conciliatory conduct of Lord Botetourt, and by his assurances, made on the strength of letters received from the ministry, that the grievances complained of would be speedily redressed, now broke out with more violence than ever. The Virginians spurned the mock remedy, which left the real cause of complaint untouched. His lordship also felt deeply wounded by the disingenuousness of ministers which had led him into such a predicament, and wrote home demanding his discharge. Before it arrived, an attack of bilious fever, acting upon a delicate and sensitive frame, enfeebled by anxiety and chagrin, laid him in his grave. He left behind him a name endeared to the Virginians by his amiable manners, his liberal patronage of the arts, and, above all, by his zealous intercession for their rights. Washington himself testifies that he was inclined "to render every just and reasonable service to the people whom he governed." A statue to his memory was decreed by the House of Burgesses, to be erected in the area of the capitol. It is still to be seen, though in a mutilated condition, in Williamsburg, the old seat of government, and a county in Virginia continues to bear his honoured name.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Expedition of Washington to the Ohio, in behalf of Soldiers' Claims—Uneasy State of the Frontier—Visit to Fort Pitt—George Croghan—His Mishaps during Pontiac's War—Washington descends the Ohio—Scenes and Adventures along the River—Indian Hunting Camp—Interview with an old Sachem at the Mouth of the Kanawha—Return—Claims of Stobo and Van Braam—Letter to Colonel George Muse.

In the midst of these popular turmoils, Washington was induced by public as well as private considerations, to make another expedition to the Ohio. He was one of the Virginia board of commissioners, appointed, at the close of the late war, to settle the military accounts of the colony. Among the claims which came before the board, were those of the officers and soldiers who had engaged to serve until peace, under the proclamation of Governor Dinwiddie, holding forth a bounty of two hundred thousand acres of land, to be apportioned among them according to rank. Those claims were yet unsatisfied, for governments, like individuals, are slow to pay off in peaceful times the debts incurred while in the fighting mood. Washington became the champion of those claims, and an opportunity now presented itself for their liquidation. The Six Nations, by a treaty in 1768, had ceded to the British crown, in consideration of a sum of money, all the lands possessed by them south of the Ohio. Land offices would soon be opened for the sale of them. Squatters and speculators were already preparing to swarm in, set up their marks on the choicest spots, and establish what were called pre-emption rights. Washington determined at once to visit the lands thus ceded; affix his mark on such tracts as he should select, and apply for a grant from government in behalf of the "soldiers' claim."

The expedition would be attended with some degree of danger. The frontier was yet in an uneasy state. It is true some time had elapsed since the war of Pontiac, but some of the Indian tribes were almost ready to resume the hatchet. The Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingoes, complained that the Six Nations had not given them their full share of the consideration money of the late sale, and they talked of exacting the deficiency from the white men who

came to settle in what had been their hunting-grounds. Traders, squatters, and other adventurers into the wilderness, were occasionally murdered, and further troubles were apprehended.

Washington had for companion in this expedition his friend and neighbour, Dr. Craik, and it was with strong community of feeling they looked forward peaceably to revisit the scenes of their military experience. They set out on the 5th of October, with three negro attendants, two belonging to Washington, and one to the doctor. The whole party was mounted, and there was a led horse for the baggage.

After twelve days' travelling, they arrived at Fort Pitt (late Fort Duquesne). It was garrisoned by two companies of royal Irish, commanded by a Captain Edmonson. A hamlet of about twenty log-houses, inhabited by Indian traders, had sprang up within three hundred yards of the fort, and was called "the town." It was the embryo city of Pittsburg, now so populous. At one of the houses, a tolerable frontier inn, they took up their quarters; but during their brief sojourn, they were entertained with great hospitality at the fort.

Here at dinner Washington met his old acquaintance, George Croghan, who had figured in so many capacities and experienced so many vicissitudes on the frontier. He was now Colonel Croghan, deputy-agent to Sir William Johnson, and had his residence—or seat, as Washington terms it—on the banks of the Allegany River, about four miles from the fort.

Croghan had experienced troubles and dangers during the Pontiac war, both from white man and savage. At one time, while he was conveying presents from Sir William to the Delawares and Shawnees, his caravan was set upon and plundered by a band of backwoodsmen of Pennsylvania—men resembling Indians in garb and habits, and fully as lawless. At another time, when encamped at the mouth of the Wabash with some of his Indian allies, a band of Kickapoos, supposing the latter to be Cherokees, their deadly enemies, rushed forth from the woods with horrid yells, shot down several of his companions, and wounded himself. It must be added, that no white men

could have made more ample apologies than did the Kickapoos, when they discovered that they had fired upon friends.

Another of Croghan's perils was from the redoubtable Pontiac himself. That chieftain had heard of his being on a mission to win off, by dint of presents, the other sachems of the conspiracy, and declared, significantly, that he had a large kettle boiling in which he intended to seethe the ambassador. It was fortunate for Croghan that he did not meet with the formidable chieftain while in this exasperated mood. He subsequently encountered him when Pontiac's spirits were broken by reverses. They smoked the pipe of peace together, and the colonel claimed the credit of having, by his diplomacy, persuaded the sachem to bury the hatchet.

On the day following the repast at the fort, Washington visited Croghan at his abode on the Allegany River, where he found several of the chiefs of the Six Nations assembled. One of them, the White Mingo by name, made him a speech, accompanied, as usual, by a belt of wampum. Some of his companions, he said, remembered to have seen him in 1753, when he came on his embassy to the French commander; most of them had heard of him. They had now come to welcome him to their country. They wished the people of Virginia to consider them as friends and brothers, linked together in one chain, and requested him to inform the governor of their desire to live in peace and harmony with the white men. As to certain unhappy differences which had taken place between them on the frontiers, they were all made up, and, they hoped, forgotten.

Washington accepted the "speech-belt," and made a suitable reply, assuring the chiefs that nothing was more desired by the people of Virginia than to live with them on terms of the strictest friendship.

At Pittsburg the travellers left their horses, and embarked in a large canoe, to make a voyage down the Ohio as far as the Great Kanawha. Colonel Croghan engaged two Indians for their service, and an interpreter named John Nicholson. The colonel and some of the officers of the garrison accompanied them as far as Logstown, the scene of Washington's early diplomacy, and his first inter-

view with the half-king. Here they breakfasted together; after which they separated, the colonel and his companions cheering the voyagers from the shore, as the canoe was borne off by the current of the beautiful Ohio.

It was now the hunting season, when the Indians leave their towns, set off with their families, and lead a roving life in cabins and hunting-camps along the river; shifting from place to place, as game abounds or decreases, and often extending their migrations two or three hundred miles down the stream. The women were as dexterous as the men in the management of the canoe, but were generally engaged in the domestic labours of the lodge while their husbands were abroad hunting.

Washington's propensities as a sportsman had here full play. Deer were continually to be seen coming down to the water's edge to drink, or browsing along the shore; there were innumerable flocks of wild turkeys, and streaming flights of ducks and geese; so that as the voyagers floated along, they were enabled to load their canoe with game. At night they encamped on the river bank, lit their fire and made a sumptuous hunter's repast. Washington always relished this wild-wood life; and the present had that spice of danger in it, which has a peculiar charm for adventurous minds. The great object of his expedition, however, is evinced in his constant notes on the features and character of the country; the quality of the soil as indicated by the nature of the trees, and the level tracts fitted for settlements.

About seventy-five miles below Pittsburg the voyagers landed at a Mingo town, which they found in a stir of warlike preparation—sixty of the warriors being about to set off on a foray into the Cherokee country against the Catawbas.

Here the voyagers were brought to a pause by a report that two white men, traders, had been murdered about thirty-eight miles further down the river. Reports of the kind were not to be treated lightly. Indian faith was uncertain along the frontier, and white men were often shot down in the wilderness for plunder or revenge. On the following day the report moderated. Only one man was said to have been killed, and that not by Indians; so

Washington determined to continue forward until he could obtain correct information in the matter.

On the 24th, about three o'clock in the afternoon, the voyagers arrived at Captema Creek, at the mouth of which the trader was said to have been killed. As all was quiet and no one to be seen, they agreed to encamp, while Nicholson, the interpreter, and one of the Indians, repaired to a village a few miles up the creek to inquire about the murder. They found but two old women at the village. The men were all absent, hunting. The interpreter returned to camp in the evening, bringing the truth of the murderous tale. A trader had fallen a victim to his temerity, having been drowned in attempting, in company with another, to swim his horse across the Ohio

Two days more of voyaging brought them to an Indian hunting camp, near the mouth of the Muskingum. Here it was necessary to land and make a ceremonious visit, for the chief of the hunting party was Kiashuta, a Seneca sachem, and head of the river tribes. He was noted to have been among the first to raise the hatchet in Pontiac's conspiracy, and almost equally vindictive with that potent warrior. As Washington approached the chieftain, he recognized him for one of the Indians who had accompanied him on his mission to the French in 1753.

Kiashuta retained a perfect recollection of the youthful ambassador, though seventeen years had matured him into thoughtful manhood. With hunter's hospitality he gave him a quarter of a fine buffalo just slain, but insisted that they should encamp together for the night; and in order not to retard him, moved with his own party to a good camping place some distance down the river. Here they had long talks and council-fires over night and in the morning, with all the "tedious ceremony," says Washington, "which the Indians observe in their counsellings and speeches." Kiashuta had heard of what had passed between Washington and the "White Mingo," and other sachems, at Colonel Croghan's, and was eager to express his own desire for peace and friendship with Virginia, and fair dealings with her traders; all which Washington promised to report faithfully to the governor. It was not until a late hour in the morning that he was enabled

to bring these conferences to a close, and pursue his voyage.

At the mouth of the Great Kanawha the voyagers encamped for a day or two to examine the lands in the neighbourhood, and Washington set up his mark upon such as he intended to claim on behalf of the soldiers' grant. It was a fine sporting country, having small lakes or grassy ponds abounding with water-fowl, such as ducks, geese, and swans. Flocks of turkeys, as usual; and for larger game, deer and buffalo; so that their camp abounded with provisions.

Here Washington was visited by an old sachem who approached him with great reverence, at the head of several of his tribe, and addressed him through Nicholson, the interpreter. He had heard, he said, of his being in that part of the country, and had come from a great distance to see him. On further discourse, the sachem made known that he was one of the warriors in the service of the French, who lay in ambush on the banks of the Monongahela and wrought such havoc in Braddock's army. He declared that he and his young men had singled out Washington, as he made himself conspicuous riding about the field of battle with the general's orders, and had fired at him repeatedly, but without success; whence they had concluded that he was under the protection of the Great Spirit, had a charmed life, and could not be slain in battle.

At the Great Kanawha Washington's expedition down the Ohio terminated; having visited all the points he wished to examine. His return to Fort Pitt, and thence homeward, affords no incident worthy of note. The whole expedition, however, was one of that hardy and adventurous kind, mingled with practical purposes, in which he delighted. This winter voyage down the Ohio in a canoe, with the doctor for a companion and two Indians for crew, through regions yet insecure from the capricious hostility of prowling savages, is not one of the least striking of his frontier "experiences." The hazardous nature of it was made apparent shortly afterwards by another outbreak of the Ohio tribes; one of its bloodiest actions took place on the very banks of the Great Kanawha, in which Colonel Lewis and a number of brave Virginians lost their lives.

NOTE.

In the final adjustment of claims under Governor Dinwiddie's proclamation, Washington, acting on behalf of the officers and soldiers, obtained grants for the lands he had marked out in the course of his visit to the Ohio. Fifteen thousand acres were awarded to a field-officer, nine thousand to a captain, six thousand to a subaltern, and so on. Among the claims which he entered were those of Stobo and Van Braam, the hostages in the capitulation at the Great Meadows. After many vicissitudes they were now in London, and nine thousand acres were awarded to each of them. Their domains were ultimately purchased by Washington through his London agent.

Another claimant was Colonel George Muse, Washington's early instructor in military science. His claim was admitted with difficulty, for he stood accused of having acted the part of a poltroon in the campaign, and Washington seems to have considered the charge well founded. Still he appears to have been dissatisfied with the share of land assigned to him, and to have written to Washington somewhat rudely on the subject. His letter is not extant, but we subjoin Washington's reply almost entire, as a specimen of the caustic pen he could wield under a mingled emotion of scorn and indignation.

"Sir,—Your impertinent letter was delivered to me yesterday. As I am not accustomed to receive such from any man, nor would have taken the same language from you personally, without letting you feel some marks of my resentment, I advise you to be cautious in writing me a second of the same tenor; for though I understand you were drunk when you did it, yet give me leave to tell you that drunkenness is no excuse for rudeness. But for your stupidity and sottishness you might have known, by attending to the public gazette, that you had your full quantity of ten thousand acres of land allowed you; that is, nine thousand and seventy-three acres in the great tract, and the remainder in the small tract.

"But suppose you had really fallen short, do you think your superlative merit entitles you to greater indulgence than others? Or, if it did, that I was to make it good to you, when it was at the option of the governor and council to allow but five hundred acres in the whole, if they had been so inclined? If either of these should happen to be your opinion, I am very well convinced that you will be singular in it; and all my concern is that I ever engaged myself in behalf of so ungrateful and dirty a fellow as you are."

N.B.—The above is from the letter as it exists in the archives of the Department of State at Washington. It differs in two or three particulars from that published among Washington's writings.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Lord Dunmore Governor of Virginia—Piques the Pride of the Virginians—Opposition of the Assembly—Corresponding Committees—Death of Miss Custis—Washington's Guardianship of John Parke Custis—His Opinions as to premature Travel and premature Marriage.

The discontents of Virginia, which had been partially soothed by the amiable administration of Lord Botetourt, were irritated anew under his successor, the Earl of Dunmore. This nobleman had for a short time held the government of New York. When appointed to that of Virginia, he lingered for several months at his former post. In the mean time he sent his military secretary, Captain Foy, to attend to the despatch of business until his arrival, awarding to him a salary and fees to be paid by the colony.

The pride of the Virginians was piqued at his lingering at New York, as if he preferred its gaiety and luxury to the comparative quiet and simplicity of Williamsburg. Their pride was still more piqued on his arrival, by what they considered haughtiness on his part. The spirit of the "Ancient Dominion" was roused, and his lordship experienced opposition at his very outset.

The first measure of the Assembly, at its opening, was to demand by what right he had awarded a salary and fees to his secretary without consulting it, and to question whether it was authorised by the crown.

His lordship had the good policy to rescind the unauthorised act, and in so doing mitigated the ire of the Assembly; but he lost no time in proroguing a body which, from various symptoms, appeared to be too independent, and disposed to be untractable.

He continued to prorogue it from time to time, seeking in the interim to conciliate the Virginians, and soothe their irritated pride. At length, after repeated prorogations, he was compelled by circumstances to convene it on the 1st of March, 1773.

Washington was prompt in his attendance on the occasion, and foremost among the patriotic members who eagerly availed themselves of this long-wished-for opportunity to legislate upon the general affairs of the colonies.

One of their most important measures was the appointment of a committee of eleven persons, "whose business it should be to obtain the most clear and authentic intelligence of all such acts and resolutions of the British Parliament, or proceedings of administration, as may relate to or affect the British colonies, and to maintain with their sister colonies a correspondence and communication."

The plan thus proposed by their "noble patriotic sister colony of Virginia,"[1] was promptly adopted by the people of Massachusetts, and soon met with general concurrence. These corresponding committees, in effect, became the executive power of the patriot party, producing the happiest concert of design and action throughout the colonies.

Notwithstanding the decided part taken by Washington in the popular movement, very friendly relations existed between him and Lord Dunmore. The latter appreciated his character, and sought to avail himself of his experience in the affairs of the province. It was even concerted that Washington should accompany his lordship on an extensive tour, which the latter intended to make in the course of the summer along the western frontier. A melancholy circumstance occurred to defeat this arrangement.

We have spoken of Washington's paternal conduct towards the two children of Mrs. Washington. The daughter, Miss Custis, had long been an object of extreme solicitude. She was of a fragile constitution, and for some time past had been in very declining health. Early in the present summer symptoms indicated a rapid change for the worse. Washington was absent from home at the time. On his return to Mount Vernon he found her in the last stage of consumption.

Though not a man given to bursts of sensibility, he is said on the present occasion to have evinced the deepest affliction; kneeling by her bedside, and pouring out earnest prayers for her recovery. She expired on the 19th of June, in the seventeenth year of her age. This, of course, put an end to Washington's intention of accompanying Lord Dunmore to the frontier; he remained at home to console Mrs. Washington in her affliction, furnishing his lordship,

[1] Boston Town Records.

however, with travelling hints and directions, and recommending proper guides. And here we will take occasion to give a few brief particulars of domestic affairs at Mount Vernon.

For a long time previous to the death of Miss Custis, her mother, despairing of her recovery, had centred her hopes in her son, John Parke Custis. This rendered Washington's guardianship of him a delicate and difficult task. He was lively, susceptible, and impulsive; had an independent fortune in his own right, and an indulgent mother ever ready to plead in his behalf against wholesome discipline. He had been placed under the care and instruction of an Episcopal clergyman at Annapolis, but was occasionally at home, mounting his horse and taking a part, while yet a boy, in the fox-hunts at Mount Vernon. His education had consequently been irregular and imperfect, and not such as Washington would have enforced had he possessed over him the absolute authority of a father. Shortly after the return of the latter from his tour to the Ohio, he was concerned to find that there was an idea entertained of sending the lad abroad, though but little more than sixteen years of age, to travel under the care of his clerical tutor. Through his judicious interference the travelling scheme was postponed, and it was resolved to give the young gentleman's mind the benefit of a little preparatory home culture.

Little more than a year elapsed before the sallying impulses of the youth had taken a new direction. He was in love, what was more he was engaged to the object of his passion, and on the high road to matrimony.

Washington now exerted himself to prevent premature marriage as he had premature travel. A correspondence ensued between him and the young lady's father, Benedict Calvert, Esq. The match was a satisfactory one to all parties, but it was agreed that it was expedient for the youth to pass a year or two previously in college. Washington accordingly accompanied him to New York, and placed him under the care of the Rev. Dr. Cooper, president of King's (now Columbia) College, to pursue his studies in that institution. All this occurred before the death of his sister. Within a year after that melancholy event, he

became impatient for a union with the object of his choice. His mother, now more indulgent than ever to this, her only child, yielded her consent, and Washington no longer made opposition.

"It has been against my wishes," writes the latter to President Cooper, "that he should quit college in order that he may soon enter into a new scene of life, which I think he would be much fitter for some years hence than now. But having his own inclination, the desires of his mother, and the acquiescence of almost all his relatives to encounter, I did not care, as he is the last of the family, to push my opposition too far; I have, therefore, submitted to a kind of necessity."

The marriage was celebrated on the 3rd of February, 1774, before the bridegroom was twenty-one years of age.

NOTE.

We are induced to subjoin extracts of two letters from Washington relative to young Custis. The first gives his objections to premature travel; the second to premature matrimony. Both are worthy of consideration in this country, where our young people have such a general disposition to "go ahead."

To the Reverend Jonathan Boucher (the tutor of young Custis).

* * * * "I cannot help giving it as my opinion, that his education, however advanced it may be for a youth of his age, is by no means ripe enough for a travelling tour; not that I think his becoming a mere scholar is a desirable education for a gentleman, but I conceive a knowledge of books is the basis upon which all other knowledge is to be built, and in travelling he is to become acquainted with men and things, rather than books. At present, however well versed he may be in the principles of the Latin language (which is not to be wondered at, as he began the study of it as soon as he could speak), he is unacquainted with several of the classic authors that might be useful to him. He is ignorant of Greek, the advantages of learning which I do not pretend to judge of; and he knows nothing of French, which is absolutely necessary to him as a traveller. He has little or no acquaintance with arithmetic, and is totally ignorant of the mathematics—than which, at least, so much of them as relates to surveying, nothing can be more essentially necessary to any man possessed of a large landed estate, the bounds of some part or other of which are always in controversy. Now whether he has time between this and next spring to acquire a sufficient knowledge of these studies, I leave you to judge; as, also, whether a boy of seventeen years old (which will be his age next November), can have any just notions of the end and design of travelling. I have already given it as my opinion that it

would be precipitating this event, unless he were to go immediately to the university for a couple of years; in which case he could see nothing of America; which might be a disadvantage to him, as it is to be expected that every man, who travels with a view of observing the laws and customs of other countries, should be able to give some description of the situation and government of his own."

The following are extracts from the letter to Benedict Calvert, Esq., the young lady's father:—

"I write to you on a subject of importance, and of no small embarrassment to me. My son-in-law and ward, Mr. Custis, has, as I have been informed, paid his addresses to your second daughter; and having made some progress in her affections, has solicited her in marriage. How far a union of this sort may be agreeable to you, you best can tell; but I should think myself wanting in candour, were I not to confess that Miss Nelly's amiable qualities are acknowledged on all hands, and that an alliance with your family will be pleasing to his.

"This acknowledgment being made, you must permit me to add, sir, that at this, or in any short time, his youth, inexperience, and unripened education are, and will be, insuperable obstacles, in my opinion, to the completion of the marriage. As his guardian, I conceive it my indispensable duty to endeavour to carry him through a regular course of education (many branches of which, I am sorry to say, he is totally deficient in), and to guide his youth to a more advanced age, before an event, on which his own peace and the happiness of another are to depend, takes place. * * * * If the affection which they have avowed for each other is fixed upon a solid basis, it will receive no diminution in the course of two or three years; in which time he may prosecute his studies, and thereby render himself more deserving of the lady, and useful to society. If, unfortunately, as they are both young, there should be an abatement of affection on either side, or both, it had better precede than follow marriage.

"Delivering my sentiments thus freely, will not, I hope, lead you into a belief that I am desirous of breaking off the match. To postpone it is all I have in view; for I shall recommend to the young gentleman, with the warmth that becomes a man of honour, to consider himself as much engaged to your daughter, as if the indissoluble knot were tied; and as the surest means of effecting this, to apply himself closely to his studies, by which he will, in a great measure, avoid those little flirtations with other young ladies, that may, by dividing the attention, contribute not a little to divide the affection."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Lord North's Bill favouring the Exportation of Teas—Ships freighted with Tea to the Colonies—Sent back from some of the Ports—Tea destroyed at Boston—Passage of the Boston Port Bill—Session of the House of Burgesses—Splendid Opening—Burst of Indignation at the Port Bill—House dissolved—Resolutions at the Raleigh Tavern—Project of a General Congress—Washington and Lord Dunmore—The Port Bill goes into effect—General Gage at Boston—League and Covenant.

The general covenant throughout the colonies against the use of taxed tea, had operated disastrously against the interests of the East India Company, and produced an immense accumulation of the proscribed article in their warehouses. To remedy this, Lord North brought in a bill (1773), by which the company were allowed to export their teas from England to any part whatever without paying export duty. This, by enabling them to offer their teas at a low price in the colonies would, he supposed, tempt the Americans to purchase large quantities, thus relieving the company, and at the same time benefiting the revenue by the impost duty. Confiding in the wisdom of this policy, the company disgorged their warehouses, freighted several ships with tea, and sent them to various parts of the colonies. This brought matters to a crisis. One sentiment, one determination, pervaded the whole continent. Taxation was to receive its definitive blow. Whoever submitted to it was an enemy to his country. From New York to Philadelphia the ships were sent back, unladen, to London. In Charleston the tea was unloaded, and stored away in cellars and other places, where it perished. At Boston the action was still more decisive. The ships anchored in the harbour. Some small parcels of tea were brought on shore, but the sale of them was prohibited. The captains of the ships, seeing the desperate state of the case, would have made sail back for England, but they could not obtain the consent of the consignees, a clearance at the custom-house, or a passport from the governor to clear the fort. It was evident, the tea was to be forced upon the people, of Boston, and the principle of taxation established.

To settle the matter completely, and prove that, on a point of principle, they were not to be trifled with, a number of the inhabitants, disguised as Indians, boarded the ships in the night (18th December), broke open all the chests of tea, and emptied the contents into the sea. This was no rash and intemperate proceeding of a mob, but the well-considered, though resolute act of sober, respectable citizens, men of reflection, but determination. The whole was done calmly, and in perfect order; after which the actors in the scene dispersed without tumult, and returned quietly to their homes.

The general opposition of the colonies to the principle of taxation had given great annoyance to government, but this individual act concentrated all its wrath upon Boston. A bill was forthwith passed in Parliament (commonly called the Boston Port Bill), by which all lading and unlading of goods, wares, and merchandise, were to cease in that town and harbour, on and after the 4th of June, and the officers of the customs to be transferred to Salem.

Another law, passed soon after, altered the charter of the province, decreeing that all counsellors, judges, and magistrates should be appointed by the crown, and hold office during the royal pleasure.

This was followed by a third, intended for the suppression of riots; and providing that any person indicted for murder, or other capital offence, committed in aiding the magistracy, might be sent by the governor to some other colony, or to Great Britain for trial.

Such was the bolt of Parliamentary wrath fulminated against the devoted town of Boston. Before it fell there was a session in May, of the Virginia House of Burgesses. The social position of Lord Dunmore had been strengthened in the province by the arrival of his lady, and a numerous family of sons and daughter. The whole Virginia aristocracy had vied with each other in hospitable attentions to the family. A court circle had sprung up. Regulations had been drawn up by a herald, and published officially, determining the rank and precedence of civil and military officers, and their wives. The aristocracy of the ancient dominion was furbishing up its former splendour. Carriages and four rolled into the streets of Williamsburg, with

horses handsomely caparisoned, bringing the wealthy planters and their families to the seat of government.

Washington arrived in Williamsburg on the 16th, and dined with the governor on the day of his arrival, having a distinguished position in the court circle, and being still on terms of intimacy with his lordship. The House of Burgesses was opened in form, and one of its first measures was an address of congratulation to the governor, on the arrival of his lady. It was followed up by an agreement among the members to give her ladyship a splendid ball, on the 27th of the month.

All things were going on smoothly and smilingly, when a letter, received through the corresponding committee, brought intelligence of the vindictive measure of Parliament, by which the port of Boston was to be closed on the approaching 1st of June.

The letter was read in the House of Burgesses, and produced a general burst of indignation. All other business was thrown aside, and this became the sole subject of discussion. A protest against this and other recent acts of Parliament was entered upon the journal of the House, and a resolution was adopted, on the 24th of May, setting apart the first of June as a day of fasting, prayer, and humiliation; in which the divine interposition was to be implored, to avert the heavy calamity threatening destruction to their rights, and all the evils of civil war; and to give the people one heart and one mind in firmly opposing every injury to American liberties.

On the following morning, while the Burgesses were engaged in animated debate, they were summoned to attend Lord Dunmore in the council chamber, where he made them the following laconic speech; "Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Burgesses: I have in my hand a paper, published by order of your House, conceived in such terms, as reflect highly upon his majesty, and the Parliament of Great Britain, which makes it necessary for me to dissolve you, and you are dissolved accordingly."

As on a former occasion, the Assembly, though dissolved, was not dispersed. The members adjourned to the long room of the old Raleigh tavern, and passed resolutions, denouncing the Boston Port Bill as a most dangerous

attempt to destroy the constitutional liberty and rights of all North America; recommending their countrymen to desist from the use, not merely of tea, but of all kinds of East Indian commodities; pronouncing an attack on one of the colonies, to enforce arbitrary taxes, an attack on all; and ordering the committee of correspondence to communicate with the other corresponding committees, on the expediency of appointing deputies from the several colonies of British America, to meet annually in General Congress, at such place as might be deemed expedient, to deliberate on such measures as the united interests of the colonies might require.

This was the first recommendation of a General Congress by any public assembly, though it had been previously proposed in town meetings at New York and Boston. A resolution to the same effect was passed in the Assembly of Massachusetts before it was aware of the proceedings of the Virginia Legislature. The measure recommended met with prompt and general concurrence throughout the colonies, and the fifth day of September next ensuing was fixed upon for the meeting of the first Congress, which was to be held at Philadelphia.

Notwithstanding Lord Dunmore's abrupt dissolution of the House of Burgesses, the members still continued on courteous terms with him, and the ball which they had decreed early in the session in honour of Lady Dunmore, was celebrated on the 27th with unwavering gallantry.

As to Washington, widely as he differed from Lord Dunmore on important points of policy, his intimacy with him remained uninterrupted. By memorandums in his diary it appears that he dined and passed the evening at his lordship's on the 25th, the very day of the meeting at the Raleigh tavern. That he rode out with him to his farm, and breakfasted there with him on the 26th, and on the evening of the 27th attended the ball given to her ladyship. Such was the well-bred decorum that seemed to quiet the turbulence of popular excitement, without checking the full and firm expression of popular opinion.

On the 29th, two days after the ball, letters arrived from Boston giving the proceedings of a town-meeting, recommending that a general league should be formed through-

out the colonies suspending all trade with Great Britain. But twenty-five members of the late House of Burgesses, including Washington, were at that time remaining in Williamsburg. They held a meeting on the following day, at which Peyton Randolph presided as mederator. After some discussion it was determined to issue a printed circular, bearing their signatures, and calling a meeting of all the members of the late House of Burgesses, on the 1st of August, to take into consideration this measure of a general league. The circular recommended them, also, to collect, in the mean time, the sense of their respective counties.

Washington was still at Williamsburg on the 1st of June, the day when the Port Bill was to be enforced at Boston. It was ushered in by the tolling of bells, and observed by all true patriots as a day of fasting and humiliation. Washington notes in his diary that he fasted rigidly, and attended the services appointed in the church. Still his friendly intercourse with the Dunmore family was continued during the remainder of his sojourn in Williamsburg, where he was detained by business until the 20th, when he set out on his return to Mount Vernon.

In the mean time the Boston Port Bill had been carried into effect. On the 1st of June the harbour of Boston was closed at noon, and all business ceased. The two other parliamentary acts altering the charter of Massachusetts were to be enforced. No public meetings, excepting the annual town meetings in March and May, were to be held without permission of the governor.

General Thomas Gage had recently been appointed to the military command of Massachusetts, and the carrying out of these offensive acts. He was the same officer who, as lieutenant-colonel, had led the advance guard on the field of Braddock's defeat. Fortune had since gone well with him. Rising in the service, he had been governor of Montreal, and had succeeded Amherst in the command of the British forces on this continent. He was linked to the country also by domestic ties, having married into one of the most respectable families of New Jersey. In the various situations in which he had hitherto been placed he had won esteem, and rendered himself popular. Not

much was expected from him in his present post by those who knew him well. William Smith, the historian, speaking of him to Adams, "Gage," said he, "was a good-natured, peaceable, sociable man while here (in New York), but altogether unfit for a governor of Massachusetts. He will lose all the character he has acquired as a man, a gentleman, and a general, and dwindle down into a mere scribbling governor—a mere Bernard or Hutchinson."

With all Gage's experience in America, he had formed a most erroneous opinion of the character of the people. "The Americans," said he to the king, "will be lions only as long as the English are lambs;" and he engaged, with five regiments, to keep Boston quiet!

The manner in which his attempts to enforce the recent acts of Parliament were resented, showed how egregiously he was in error. At the suggestion of the Assembly, a paper was circulated through the province by the committee of correspondence, entitled "a solemn league and covenant," the subscribers to which bound themselves to break off all intercourse with Great Britain from the 1st of August, until the colony should be restored to the enjoyment of its chartered rights; and to renounce all dealings with those who should refuse to enter into this compact.

The very title of league and covenant had an ominous sound, and startled General Gage. He issued a proclamation, denouncing it as illegal and traitorous. Furthermore, he encamped a force of infantry and artillery on Boston Common, as if prepared to enact the lion. An alarm spread through the adjacent country. "Boston is to be blockaded! Boston is to be reduced to obedience by force or famine!" The spirit of the yeomanry was aroused. They sent on word to the inhabitants promising to come to their aid if necessary; and urging them to stand fast to the faith. Affairs were coming to a crisis. It was predicted that the new acts of Parliament would bring on "a most important and decisive trial."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Washington Chairman of a Political Meeting—Correspondence with Bryan Fairfax—Patriotic Resolutions—Washington's Opinions on Public Affairs—Non-Importation Scheme—Convention at Williamsburg—Washington appointed a Delegate to the General Congress—Letter from Bryan Fairfax—Perplexities of General Gage at Boston.

Shortly after Washington's return to Mount Vernon, in the latter part of June, he presided as moderator at a meeting of the inhabitants of Fairfax County, wherein, after the recent acts of Parliament had been discussed, a committee was appointed, with himself as chairman, to draw up resolutions expressive of the sentiments of the present meeting, and to report the same at a general meeting of the county, to be held in the court-house on the 18th of July.

The course that public measures were taking shocked the loyal feelings of Washington's valued friend, Bryan Fairfax, of Tarlston Hall, a young brother of George William, who was absent in England. He was a man of liberal sentiments, but attached to the ancient rule; and, in a letter to Washington, advised a petition to the throne, which would give Parliament an opportunity to repeal the offensive acts.

"I would heartily join you in your political sentiments," writes Washington in reply, "as far as relates to a humble and dutiful petition to the throne, provided there was the most distant hope of success. But have we not tried this already? Have we not addressed the lords, and remonstrated to the commons? And to what end? Does it not appear as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness that there is a regular, systematic plan to fix the right and practice of taxation upon us? * * * * * Is not the attack upon the liberty and property of the people of Boston, before restitution of the loss to the India Company was demanded, a plain and self-evident proof of what they are aiming at? Do not the subsequent bills for depriving the Massachusetts Bay of its charter, and for transporting offenders to other colonies or to Great Britain for trial, where it is impossible, from the nature of things, that justice can be obtained, convince us that the administration

is determined to stick at nothing to carry its point? Ought we not, then, to put our virtue and fortitude to the severest tests?"

The committee met according to appointment, with Washington as chairman. The resolutions framed at the meeting insisted, as usual, on the right of self-government, and the principle that taxation and representation were in their nature inseparable. That the various acts of Parliament for raising revenue; taking away trials by jury; ordering that persons might be tried in a different country from that in which the cause of accusation originated; closing the port of Boston; abrogating the charter of Massachusetts Bay, &c., &c.,—were all part of a premeditated design and system to introduce arbitrary government into the colonies. That the sudden and repeated dissolutions of Assemblies whenever they presumed to examine the illegality of ministerial mandates, or deliberated on the violated rights of their constituents, were part of the same system, and calculated and intended to drive the people of the colonies to a state of desperation, and to dissolve the compact by which their ancestors bound themselves and their posterity to remain dependent on the British crown. The resolutions, furthermore, recommended the most perfect union and co-operation among the colonies; solemn covenants with respect to non-importation and non-intercourse, and a renunciation of all dealings with any colony, town, or province, that should refuse to agree to the plan adopted by the General Congress.

They also recommended a dutiful petition and remonstrance from the Congress to the king, asserting their constitutional rights and privileges; lamenting the necessity of entering into measures that might be displeasing; declaring their attachment to his person, family, and government, and their desire to continue in dependence upon Great Britain; beseeching him not to reduce his faithful subjects of America to desperation, and to reflect that *from our sovereign there can be but one appeal.*

These resolutions are the more worthy of note, as expressive of the opinions and feelings of Washington at this eventful time, if not being entirely dictated by him. The

last sentence is of awful import, suggesting the possibility of being driven to an appeal to arms.

Bryan Fairfax, who was aware of their purport, addressed a long letter to Washington, on the 17th of July, the day preceding that in which they were to be reported by the committee, stating his objections to several of them, and requesting that his letter might be publicly read. The letter was not received until after the committee had gone to the court-house on the 18th, with the resolutions revised, corrected, and ready to be reported. Washington glanced over the letter hastily, and handed it round to several of the gentlemen present. They, with one exception, advised that it should not be publicly read, as it was not likely to make any converts, and was repugnant, as some thought, to every principle they were contending for. Washington forbore, therefore, to give it any further publicity.

The resolutions reported by the committee were adopted, and Washington was chosen a delegate to represent the county at the General Convention of the province, to be held at Williamsburg on the 1st of August. After the meeting had adjourned, he felt doubtful whether Fairfax might not be dissatisfied that his letter had not been read, as he requested, to the county at large; he wrote to him, therefore, explaining the circumstances which prevented it; at the same time replying to some of the objections which Fairfax had made to certain of the resolutions. He reiterated his belief that an appeal would be ineffectual. "What is it we are contending against?" asked he; "Is it against paying the duty of threepence per pound on tea because burdensome? No, it is the right only, that we have all along disputed; and to this end, we have already petitioned his majesty in as humble and dutiful a manner as subjects could do. Nay, more, we applied to the House of Lords and House of Commons in their different legislative capacities, setting forth that, as Englishmen, we could not be deprived of this essential and valuable part of our constitution. * * * *

"The conduct of the Boston people could not justify the rigour of their measures, unless there had been a requisition of payment, and refusal of it; nor did that conduct

require an act to deprive the government of Massachusetts Bay of their charter, or to exempt offenders from trial in the places where offences were committed, as there was not, nor could there be, a single instance produced to manifest the necessity of it. Are not all these things evident proofs of a fixed and uniform plan to tax us? If we want further proofs, do not all the debates in the House of Commons serve to confirm this? And has not General Gage's conduct since his arrival, in stopping the address of his council, and publishing a proclamation, more becoming a Turkish bashaw than an English governor, declaring it treason to associate in any manner by which the commerce of Great Britain is to be affected,—has not this exhibited an unexampled testimony of the most despotic system of tyranny that ever was practised in a free government?"

The popular measure on which Washington laid the greatest stress as a means of obtaining redress from government, was the non-importation scheme; "for I am convinced," said he, "as much as of my existence, that there is no relief for us but in their distress; and I think—at least I hope—that there is public virtue enough left among us to deny ourselves every thing but the bare necessaries of life to accomplish this end." At the same time, he forcibly condemned a suggestion that remittances to England should be withheld. "While we are accusing others of injustice," said he, "we should be just ourselves; and how this can be whilst we owe a considerable debt, and refuse payment of it to Great Britain, is to me inconceivable: nothing but the last extremity can justify it."

On the 1st of August, the convention of representatives from all parts of Virginia assembled at Williamsburg. Washington appeared on behalf of Fairfax County, and presented the resolutions, already cited, as the sense of his constituents. He is said, by one who was present, to have spoken in support of them in a strain of uncommon eloquence, which shows how his latent ardour had been excited on the occasion, as eloquence was not in general among his attributes. It is evident, however, that he was roused to an unusual pitch of enthusiasm, for he is said to have declared that he was ready to raise one thousand men, sub-

sist them at his own expense, and march at their head to the relief of Boston.[1]

The Convention was six days in session. Resolutions, in the same spirit with those passed in Fairfax county, were adopted, and Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton, were appointed delegates, to represent the people of Virginia, in the General Congress.

Shortly after Washington's return from Williamsburg, he received a reply from Bryan Fairfax, to his last letter. Fairfax, who was really a man of liberal views, seemed anxious to vindicate himself from any suspicions of the contrary. In adverting to the partial suppression of his letter by some of the gentlemen of the committee: "I am uneasy to find," writes he, "that any one should look upon the letter sent down as repugnant to the principles we are contending for; and, therefore, when you have leisure, I shall take it as a favour if you will let me know wherein it was thought so. I beg leave to look upon you as a friend, and it is a great relief to unbosom one's thoughts to a friend. Besides, the information, and the correction of my errors, which I may obtain from a correspondence, are great inducements to it. For I am convinced that no man in the colony wishes its prosperity more, would go greater lengths to serve it, or is, at the same time, a better subject to the crown. Pray excuse these compliments, they may be tolerable from a friend."[2]

The hurry of various occupations prevented Washington, in his reply, from entering into any further discussion of the popular theme. "I can only in general add," said he, "that an innate spirit of freedom first told me that the measures which the administration have for some time been, and now are violently pursuing, are opposed to every principle of natural justice; whilst much abler heads than my own have fully convinced me, that they are not only repugnant to natural right, but subversive of the laws and constitution of Great Britain itself. * * * * I shall

[1] See information given to the elder Adams, by Mr. Lynch of South Carolina.—*Adams' Diary.*

[2] Sparks. Washington's Writings, vol. ii., p. 329.

conclude with remarking that, if you disavow the right of Parliament to tax us, unrepresented as we are, we only differ in the mode of opposition, and this difference principally arises from your belief that they (the Parliament I mean), want a decent opportunity to repeal the acts; whilst I am fully convinced that there has been a regular systematic plan to enforce them, and that nothing but unanimity and firmness in the colonies, which they did not expect, can prevent it. By the best advices from Boston, it seems that General Gage is exceedingly disconcerted at the quiet and steady conduct of the people of the Massachusetts Bay, and at the measures pursuing by the other governments. I dare say he expected to force those oppressed people into compliance, or irritate them to acts of violence before this, for a more colourable pretence of ruling that, and the other colonies, with a high hand."

Washington had formed a correct opinion of the position of General Gage. From the time of taking command at Boston, he had been perplexed how to manage its inhabitants. Had they been hot-headed, impulsive, and prone to paroxysm, his task would have been comparatively easy; but it was the cool, shrewd common sense, by which all their movements were regulated, that confounded him.

High-handed measures had failed of the anticipated effect. Their harbour had been thronged with ships; their town with troops. The port bill had put an end to commerce; wharves were deserted, warehouses closed; streets grass-grown and silent. The rich were growing poor, and the poor were without employ; yet the spirit of the people was unbroken. There was no uproar, however; no riot; everything was awfully systematic and according to rule. Town meetings were held, in which public rights and public measures were eloquently discussed by John Adams, Josiah Quincy, and other eminent men. Over these meetings Samuel Adams presided as moderator; a man clear in judgment, calm in conduct, inflexible in resolution; deeply grounded in civil and political history, and infallible in all points of constitutional law.

Alarmed at the powerful influence of these assemblages, government issued an act prohibiting them after the 1st of August. The act was evaded by convoking the meetings

before that day, and *keeping them alive* indefinitely. Gage was at a loss how to act. It would not do to disperse these assemblages by force of arms, for the people who composed them mingled the soldier with the polemic; and, like their prototypes, the Covenanters of yore, if prone to argue, were as ready to fight. So the meetings continued to be held pertinaciously. Faneuil Hall was at times unable to hold them, and they swarmed from that revolutionary hive into old South Church. The liberty tree became a rallying place for any popular movement, and a flag hoisted on it was saluted by all processions as the emblem of the popular cause.

Opposition to the new plan of government assumed a more violent aspect at the extremity of the province, and was abetted by Connecticut. "It is very high," writes Gage, (August 27th,) "in Berkshire County, and makes way rapidly to the rest. At Worcester they threaten resistance, purchase arms, provide powder, cast balls, and threaten to attack any troops who may oppose them. I apprehend I shall soon have to march a body of troops into that township."

The time appointed for the meeting of the General Congress at Philadelphia was now at hand. Delegates had already gone on from Massachusetts. "It is not possible to guess," writes Gage, "what a body composed of such heterogeneous matter will determine; but the members from hence, I am assured, will promote the most haughty and insolent resolves; for their plan has ever been by threats and high-sounding sedition, to terrify and intimidate."

CHAPTER XXXV.

Meeting of the First Congress—Opening Ceremonies—Eloquence of Patrick Henry and Henry Lee—Declaratory Resolution—Bill of Rights—State Papers—Chatham's Opinions of Congress—Washington's Correspondence with Captain Mackenzie—Views with respect to Independence—Departure of Fairfax for England.

When the time approached for the meeting of the General Congress at Philadelphia, Washington was joined at Mount Vernon by Patrick Henry and Edmund Pendleton, and they

performed the journey together on horseback. It was a noble companionship. Henry was then in the youthful vigour and elasticity of his bounding genius; ardent, acute, fanciful, eloquent. Pendleton, schooled in public life, a veteran in council, with native force of intellect, and habits of deep reflection. Washington in the meridian of his days, mature in wisdom, comprehensive in mind, sagacious in foresight. Such were the apostles of liberty, repairing on their august pilgrimage to Philadelphia from all parts of the land, to lay the foundations of a mighty empire. Well may we say of that eventful period, "There were giants in those days."

Congress assembled on Monday, the fifth of September, in a large room in Carpenter's Hall. There were fifty-one delegates, representing all the colonies excepting Georgia.

The meeting has been described as "awfully solemn." The most eminent men of the various colonies, were now for the first time brought together; they were known to each other by fame, but were, personally, strangers. The object which had called them together, was of incalculable magnitude. The liberties of no less than three millions of people, with that of all their posterity, were staked on the wisdom and energy of their councils.[1]

"It is such an assembly," writes John Adams, who was present, "as never before came together on a sudden, in any part of the world. Here are fortunes, abilities, learning, eloquence, acuteness, equal to any I ever met with in my life. Here is a diversity of religions, educations, manners, interests, such as it would seem impossible to unite in one plan of conduct."

There being an inequality in the number of delegates from the different colonies, a question arose as to the mode of voting; whether by colonies, by the poll, or by interests.

Patrick Henry scouted the idea of sectional distinctions or individual interests. "All America," said he, "is thrown into one mass. Where are your landmarks—your boundaries of colonies? They are all thrown down. The distinctions between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New

[1] Wirt's Life of Patrick Henry, p. 224.

Yorkers and New Englanders, are no more. *I am not a Virginian, but an American.*"[2]

After some debate, it was determined that each colony should have but one vote, whatever might be the number of its delegates. The deliberations of the House were to be with closed doors, and nothing but the resolves promulgated, unless by order of the majority.

To give proper dignity and solemnity to the proceedings of the House it was moved on the following day, that each morning the session should be opened by prayer. To this it was demurred, that as the delegates were of different religious sects, they might not consent to join in the same form of worship.

Upon this, Mr. Samuel Adams arose and said: "He would willingly join in prayer with any gentleman of piety and virtue, whatever might be his cloth, provided he was a friend of his country;" and he moved that the reverend Mr. Duché, of Philadelphia, who answered to that description, might be invited to officiate as chaplain. This was one step towards unanimity of feeling, Mr. Adams being a strong Congregationalist, and Mr. Duché an eminent Episcopalian clergyman. The motion was carried into effect; the invitation was given and accepted.

In the course of the day, a rumour reached Philadelphia that Boston had been cannonaded by the British. It produced a strong sensation; and when Congress met on the following morning (7th), the effect was visible in every countenance. The delegates from the east were greeted with a warmer grasp of the hand by their associates from the south.

The reverend Mr. Duché, according to invitation, appeared in his canonicals, attended by his clerk. The morning service of the Episcopal church was read with great solemnity, the clerk making the responses. The Psalter for the 7th day of the month includes the 35th Psalm, wherein David prays for protection against his enemies. "Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.

"Take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for my help.

[2] J. Adams' Diary.

"Draw out, also, the spear, and stop the way of them that persecute me. Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation," &c., &c.

The imploring words of this psalm spoke the feelings of all hearts present, but especially of those from New England. John Adams writes in a letter to his wife: "You must remember this was the morning after we heard the horrible rumour of the cannonade of Boston. I never saw a greater effect upon an audience. It seemed as if heaven had ordained that psalm to be read on that morning. After this, Mr. Duché unexpectedly struck out into an extemporary prayer, which filled the bosom of every man present. Episcopalian as he is, Dr. Cooper himself never prayed with such fervour, such ardour, such earnestness and pathos, and in language so eloquent and sublime, for America, for the Congress, for the province of Massachusetts Bay, and especially the town of Boston. It has had an excellent effect upon everybody here."[3]

It has been remarked that Washington was especially devout on this occasion—kneeling, while others stood up. In this, however, each, no doubt, observed the attitude in prayer to which he was accustomed. Washington knelt, being an Episcopalian.

The rumoured attack upon Boston rendered the service of the day deeply affecting to all present. They were one political family, actuated by one feeling, and sympathizing with the weal and woe of each individual member. The rumour proved to be erroneous; but it had produced a most beneficial effect in calling forth and quickening the spirit of union, so vitally important in that assemblage.

Owing to closed doors, and the want of reporters, no record exists of the discussions and speeches made in the first Congress. Mr. Wirt, speaking from tradition, informs us that a long and deep silence followed the organization of that august body; the members looking round upon each other, individually reluctant to open a business so fearfully momentous. This "deep and death-like silence" was beginning to become painfully embarrassing, when Patrick Henry arose. He faltered at first, as was his

[3] John Adams' Correspondence and Diary.

habit; but his exordium was impressive; and as he launched forth into a recital of colonial wrongs he kindled with his subject, until he poured forth one of those eloquent appeals which had so often shaken the House of Burgesses and gained him the fame of being the greatest orator of Virginia. He sat down, according to Mr. Wirt, amidst murmurs of astonishment and applause, and was now admitted, on every hand, to be the first orator of America. He was followed by Richard Henry Lee, who, according to the same writer, charmed the house with a different kind of eloquence, chaste and classical; contrasting, in its cultivated graces, with the wild and grand effusions of Henry. "The superior powers of these great men, however," adds he, "were manifested only in debate, and while general grievances were the topic; when called down from the heights of declamation to that severer test of intellectual excellence, the details of business, they found themselves in a body of cool-headed, reflecting, and most able men, by whom they were, in their turn, completely thrown into the shade."[4]

The first public measure of Congress was a resolution declaratory of their feelings with regard to the recent acts of Parliament, violating the rights of the people of Massachusetts, and of their determination to combine in resisting any force that might attempt to carry those acts into execution.

A committee of two from each province reported a series of resolutions, which were adopted and promulgated by Congress, as a "declaration of colonial rights." In this were enumerated their natural rights to the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property; and their rights as British subjects. Among the latter was participation in legislative councils. This they could not exercise through representatives in Parliament; they claimed, therefore, the power of legislating in their provincial assemblies; consenting, however, to such acts of Parliament as might be essential to the regulation of trade; but excluding all taxation, internal or external, for raising revenue in America.

The common law of England was claimed as a birthright,

[4] Wirt's Life of Patrick Henry.

including the right of trial by a jury of the vicinage; of holding public meetings to consider grievances; and of petitioning the king. The benefits of all such statutes as existed at the time of the colonization were likewise claimed; together with the immunities and privileges granted by royal charters, or secured by provincial laws.

The maintenance of a standing army in any colony in time of peace, without the consent of its legislature, was pronounced contrary to law. The exercise of the legislative power in the colonies by a council appointed during pleasure by the crown, was declared to be unconstitutional, and destructive to the freedom of American legislation.

Then followed a specification of the acts of Parliament, passed during the reign of George III., infringing and violating these rights. These were: the sugar act; the stamp act; the two acts for quartering troops; the tea act; the act suspending the New York legislature; the two acts for the trial in Great Britain of offences committed in America; the Boston Port Bill; the act for regulating the government of Massachusetts, and the Quebec act.

"To these grievous acts and measures," it was added, "Americans cannot submit; but in hopes their fellow subjects in Great Britain will, on a revision of them, restore us to that state in which both countries found happiness and prosperity, we have, for the present, only resolved to pursue the following peaceable measures:

"1st. To enter into a non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreement, or association.

"2nd. To prepare an address to the people of Great Britain, and a memorial to the inhabitants of British America.

"3rd. To prepare a loyal address to his majesty."

The above-mentioned association was accordingly formed, and committees were to be appointed in every county, city, and town, to maintain it vigilantly and strictly.

Masterly state papers were issued by Congress in conformity to the resolutions: viz., a petition to the king, drafted by Mr. Dickinson, of Philadelphia; an address to the people of Canada by the same hand, inviting them to join the league of the colonies; another to the people of Great Britain, drafted by John Jay, of New York; and a

memorial to the inhabitants of the British colonies by Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia.[5]

The Congress remained in session fifty-one days. Every subject, according to Adams, was discussed "with a moderation, an acuteness, and a minuteness equal to that of Queen Elizabeth's privy council."[6] The papers issued by it have deservedly been pronounced masterpieces of practical talent and political wisdom. Chatham, when speaking on the subject in the House of Lords, could not restrain his enthusiasm. "When your lordships," said he, "look at the papers transmitted to us from America; when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow that, in the master states of the world, I know not the people, or senate, who, in such a complication of difficult circumstances, can stand in preference to the delegates of America assembled in General Congress at Philadelphia."

From the secrecy that enveloped its discussions, we are ignorant of the part taken by Washington in the debates; the similarity of the resolutions, however, in spirit and substance to those of the Fairfax County meeting, in which he presided, and the coincidence of the measures adopted with those therein recommended, show that he had a powerful agency in the whole proceedings of this eventful assembly. Patrick Henry, being asked, on his return home, whom he considered the greatest man, in Congress, replied: "If you speak of eloquence, Mr. Rutledge, of South Carolina, is by far the greatest orator; but if you speak of solid information and sound judgment, Colonel Washington is unquestionably the greatest man on that floor."

How thoroughly and zealously he participated in the feelings which actuated Congress in this memorable session, may be gathered from his correspondence with a friend enlisted in the royal cause. This was Captain Robert Mackenzie, who had formerly served under him in his Virginia regiment during the French war, but now held a commission in the regular army, and was stationed among the British troops at Boston.

[5] See Correspondence and Diary of J. Adams, vols. ii. and ix.
[6] Letter to William Tudor, 29th Sept., 1774.

Mackenzie, in a letter, had spoken with loyal abhorrence of the state of affairs in the "unhappy province" of Massachusetts, and the fixed aim of its inhabitants at "total independence." "The rebellious and numerous meetings of men in arms," said he, "their scandalous and ungenerous attacks upon the best characters in the province, obliging them to save themselves by flight, and their repeated, but feeble threats, to dispossess the troops, have furnished sufficient reasons to General Gage to put the town in a formidable state of defence, about which we are now fully employed, and which will be shortly accomplished to their great mortification."

"Permit me," writes Washington in reply, "with the freedom of a friend (for you know I always esteemed you), to express my sorrow that fortune should place you in a service that must fix curses, to the latest posterity, upon the contrivers, and, if success (which, by-the-by, is impossible) accompanies it, execrations upon all those who have been instrumental in the execution. * * * * When you condemn the conduct of the Massachusetts people, you reason from effects, not causes, otherwise you would not wonder at a people who are every day receiving fresh proofs of a systematic assertion of an arbitrary power, deeply planned to overturn the laws and constitution of their country, and to violate the most essential and valuable rights of mankind, being irritated, and with difficulty restrained, from acts of the greatest violence and intemperance.

"For my own part, I view things in a very different point of light from the one in which you seem to consider them; and though you are led to believe, by venal men, that the people of Massachusetts are rebellious, setting up for independency, and what not, give me leave, my good friend, to tell you that you are abused, grossly abused. * * * * I think I can announce it as a fact, that it is not the wish or interest of that government, or any other upon this continent, separately or collectively, to set up for independence; but this you may at the same time rely on, that none of them will ever submit to the loss of their valuable rights and privileges, which are essential to the happiness of every free state,

and without which, life, liberty, and property, are rendered totally insecure.

"These, sir, being certain consequences, which must naturally result from the late acts of Parliament relative to America in general, and the government of Massachusetts in particular, is it to be wondered at that men who wish to avert the impending blow, should attempt to oppose its progress, or prepare for their defence, if it cannot be averted? Surely I may be allowed to answer in the negative; and give me leave to add, as my opinion, that more blood will be spilled on this occasion, if the ministry are determined to push matters to extremity, than history has ever yet furnished instances of in the annals of North America; and such a vital wound will be given to the peace of this great country, as time itself cannot cure, or eradicate the remembrance of."

In concluding, he repeats his views with respect to independence: "I am well satisfied that no such thing is desired by any thinking man in all North America; on the contrary, that it is the ardent wish of the warmest advocates for liberty, that peace and tranquillity, upon constitutional grounds, may be restored, and the horrors of civil discord prevented."[7]

This letter we have considered especially worthy of citation, from its being so full and explicit a declaration of Washington's sentiments and opinions at this critical juncture. His views on the question of independence are particularly noteworthy, from his being at this time in daily and confidential communication with the leaders of the popular movement, and among them with the delegates from Boston. It is evident that the filial feeling still throbbed toward the mother country, and a complete separation from her had not yet entered into the alternatives of her colonial children.

On the breaking up of Congress, Washington hastened back to Mount Vernon, where his presence was more than usually important to the happiness of Mrs. Washington, from the loneliness caused by the recent death of her daughter, and the absence of her son. The cheerfulness of

[7] Sparks. Washington's Writings, vol. ii., p. 899.

the neighbourhood had been diminished of late by the departure of George William Fairfax for England, to take possession of estates which had devolved to him in that kingdom. His estate of Belvoir, so closely allied with that of Mount Vernon by family ties and reciprocal hospitality, was left in charge of a steward, or overseer. Through some accident the house took fire, and was burnt to the ground. It was never rebuilt. The course of political events which swept Washington from his quiet home into the current of public and military life, prevented William Fairfax, who was a royalist, though a liberal one, from returning to his once happy abode, and the hospitable intercommunion of Mount Vernon and Belvoir was at an end for ever.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Gage's Military Measures—Removal of Gunpowder from the Arsenal—Public Agitation—Alarms in the Country—Civil Government obstructed—Belligerent Symptoms—Israel Putnam and General Charles Lee, their Characters and Stories—General Election—Self-Constituted Congress—Hancock President—Adjourns to Concord—Remonstrance to Gage—His Perplexities—Generals Artemas Ward and Seth Pomeroy—Committee of Safety—Committee of Supplies—Restlessness throughout the Land—Independent Companies in Virginia—Military tone at Mount Vernon—Washington's Military Guests—Major Horatio Gates—Anecdotes concerning him—General Charles Lee—His Peculiarities and Dogs—Washington at the Richmond Convention—War Speech of Patrick Henry—Washington's Military Intentions.

The rumour of the cannonading of Boston, which had thrown such a gloom over the religious ceremonial at the opening of Congress, had been caused by measures of Governor Gage. The public mind, in Boston and its vicinity, had been rendered excessively jealous and sensitive by the landing and encamping of artillery upon the Common, and Welsh Fusiliers on Fort Hill, and by the planting of four large field-pieces on Boston Neck, the only entrance to the town by land. The country people were arming and disciplining themselves in every direction, and collecting and depositing arms and ammunition in places where they would be at hand in case of emergency. Gage, on the other hand, issued orders that the munitions

of war in all the public magazines should be brought to Boston. One of these magazines was the arsenal in the north-west part of Charleston, between Medford and Cambridge. Two companies of the king's troops passed silently in boats up Mystic River in the night; took possession of a large quantity of gunpowder deposited there, and conveyed it to Castle Williams. Intelligence of this sacking of the arsenal flew with lightning speed through the neighbourhood. In the morning several thousands of patriots were assembled at Cambridge, weapon in hand, and were with difficulty prevented from marching upon Boston to compel a restitution of the powder. In the confusion and agitation, a rumour stole out into the country that Boston was to be attacked; followed by another that the ships were cannonading the town, and the soldiers shooting down the inhabitants. The whole country was forthwith in arms. Numerous bodies of the Connecticut people had made some marches before the report was contradicted.[1]

To guard against any irruption from the country, Gage encamped the 59th regiment on Boston Neck, and employed the soldiers in intrenching and fortifying it.

In the mean time the belligerent feelings of the inhabitants were encouraged, by learning how the rumour of their being cannonaded had been received in the General Congress, and by assurances from all parts that the cause of Boston would be made the common cause of America. "It is surprising," writes General Gage, "that so many of the other provinces interest themselves so much in this. They have some warm friends in New York, and I learn that the people of Charleston, South Carolina, are as mad as they are here."[2]

The commissions were arrived for those civil officers appointed by the crown under the new modifications of the charter: many, however, were afraid to accept of them. Those who did soon resigned, finding it impossible to withstand the odium of the people. The civil government throughout the province became obstructed in all its oper-

[1] Holmes's Annals, ii., 191.—Letter of Gage to Lord Dartmouth.
[2] Gage to Dartmouth, Sept. 20.

ations. It was enough for a man to be supposed of the governmental party to incur popular illwill.

Among other portentous signs, war-hawks began to appear above the horizon. Mrs. Cushing, wife to a member of Congress, writes to her husband, "Two of the greatest military characters of the day are visiting this distressed town. General Charles Lee, who has served in Poland, and Colonel Israel Putnam, whose bravery and character need no description." As these two men will take a prominent part in coming events, we pause to give a word or two concerning them.

Israel Putnam was a soldier of native growth. One of the military productions of the French war; seasoned and proved in frontier campaigning. He had served at Louisburg, Fort Duquesne, and Crown Point; had signalized himself in Indian warfare; been captured by the savages, tied to a stake to be tortured and burnt, and had only been rescued by the interference, at the eleventh hour, of a French partisan of the Indians.

Since the peace, he had returned to agricultural life, and was now a farmer at Pomfret, in Connecticut, where the scars of his wounds and the tales of his exploits rendered him a hero in popular estimation. The war spirit yet burned within him. He was now chairman of a committee of vigilance, and had come to Boston in discharge of his political and semi-belligerent functions.

General Charles Lee was a military man of a different stamp; an Englishman by birth, and a highly-cultivated production of European warfare. He was the son of a British officer, lieutenant-colonel John Lee, of the dragoons, who married the daughter of Sir Henry Bunbury, Bart., and afterwards rose to be a general. Lee was born in 1731, and may almost be said to have been cradled in the army, for he received a commission by the time he was eleven years of age. He had an irregular education; part of the time in England, part on the continent, and must have scrambled his way into knowledge; yet by aptness, diligence, and ambition, he had acquired a considerable portion, being a Greek and Latin scholar, and acquainted with modern languages. The art of war was his especial study from his boyhood, and he had early opportunities of

practical experience. At the age of twenty-four, he commanded a company of grenadiers in the 44th regiment, and served in the French war in America, where he was brought into military companionship with Sir William Johnson's Mohawk warriors, whom he used to extol for their manly beauty, their dress, their graceful carriage and good breeding. In fact, he rendered himself so much of a favourite among them, that they admitted him to smoke in their councils, and adopted him into the tribe of the Bear, giving him an Indian name, sygnifying "Boiling Water."

At the battle of Ticonderoga, where Abercrombie was defeated, he was shot through the body, while leading his men against the French breastworks. In the next campaign, he was present at the siege of Fort Niagara, where General Prideaux fell, and where Sir William Johnson, with his British troops and Mohawk warriors, eventually won the fortress. Lee had, probably, an opportunity on this occasion of fighting side by side with some of his adopted brethren of the Bear tribe, as we are told he was much exposed during the engagement with the French and Indians, and that two balls grazed his hair. A military errand, afterwards, took him across Lake Erie, and down the western branch of the Ohio to Fort Duquesne, and thence by a long march of seven hundred miles to Crown Point, where he joined General Amherst. In 1760 he was among the forces which followed that general from Lake Ontario down the St. Lawrence; and was present at the surrender of Montreal, which completed the conquest of Canada.

In 1762 he bore a colonel's commission, and served under Brigadier-general Burgoyne in Portugal, where he was intrusted with an enterprise against a Spanish post at the old Moorish castle of Villa Velha, on the banks of the Tagus. He forded the river in the night, pushed his way through mountain passes, and at two o'clock in the morning, rushed with his grenadiers into the enemy's camp before daylight, where every thing was carried at the point of the bayonet, assisted by a charge of dragoons. The war over, he returned to England, bearing testimonials of bravery and good conduct from his commander-

in-chief, the Count de la Lippe, and from the king of Portugal.[3]

Wielding the pen as well as the sword, Lee undertook to write on questions of colonial policy relative to Pontiac's war, in which he took the opposition side. This lost him the favour of the ministry, and with it all hope of further promotion.

He now determined to offer his services to Poland, supposed to be on the verge of a war. Recommendations from his old commander, the Count de la Lippe, procured him access to some of the continental courts. He was well received by Frederick the Great, and had several conversations with him, chiefly on American affairs. At Warsaw, his military reputation secured him the favour of Poniatowsky, recently elected king of Poland, with the name of Stanislaus Augustus, who admitted him to his table, and made him one of his aides-de-camp. Lee was disappointed in his hope of active service. There was agitation in the country, but the power of the king was not adequate to raise forces sufficient for its suppresion. He had few troops, and those not trustworthy; and the town was full of the disaffected. "We have frequent alarms," said Lee, "and the pleasure of sleeping every night with our pistols on our pillows."

By way of relieving his restlessness, Lee, at the suggestion of the king, set off to accompany the Polish ambassador to Constantinople. The latter travelled too slow for him; so he dashed ahead when on the frontiers of Turkey, with an escort of the grand seignor's treasure; came near perishing with cold and hunger among the Bulgarian mountains, and after his arrival at the Turkish capital, ran a risk of being buried under the ruins of his house in an earthquake.

Late in the same year (1766), he was again in England, an applicant for military appointment, bearing a letter from king Stanislaus to king George. His meddling pen is supposed again to have marred his fortunes, having indulged in sarcastic comments on the military character of General Townshend and Lord George Sackville. "I

[3] Life of Charles Lee, by Jared Sparks. Also, Memoirs of Charles Lee, published in London, 1792.

am not at all surprised," said a friend to him, "that you find the door shut against you by a person who has such unbounded credit, as you have ever too freely indulged in a liberty of declaiming, which many invidious persons have not failed to inform him of. The principle on which you thus freely speak your mind is honest and patriotic, but not politic."

The disappointments which Lee met with during a residence of two years in England, and a protracted attendance on people in power, rankled in his bosom, and embittered his subsequent resentment against the king and his ministers.

In 1768 he was again on his way to Poland, with the design of performing a campaign in the Russian service. "I flatter myself," said he, "that a little more practice will make me a good soldier. If not, it will serve to talk over my kitchen fire in my old age, which will soon come upon us all."

He now looked forward to spirited service. "I am to have a command of Cossacks and Wallacks," writes he, "a kind of people I have a good opinion of. I am determined not to serve in the line. One might as well be a churchwarden."

The friendship of king Stanislaus continued. "He treats me more like a brother than a patron," said Lee. In 1769 the latter was raised to the rank of major-general in the Polish army, and left Warsaw to join the Russian force, which was crossing the Dniester and advancing into Moldavia. He arrived in time to take part in a severe action between the Russians and Turks, in which the Cossacks and hussars were terribly cut up by the Turkish cavalry, in a ravine near the city of Chotzim. It was a long and doubtful conflict, with various changes; but the rumoured approach of the grand vizier, with a hundred and seventy thousand men, compelled the Russians to abandon the enterprise and recross the Dniester.

Lee never returned to Poland, though he ever retained a devoted attachment to Stanislaus. He for some time led a restless life about Europe—visiting Italy, Sicily, Malta, and the south of Spain; troubled with attacks of rheumatism, gout, and the effects of a "Hungarian fever." He

had become more and more cynical and irascible, and had more than one "affair of honour," in one of which he killed his antagonist. His splenetic feelings, as well as his political sentiments, were occasionally vented in severe attacks upon the ministry, full of irony and sarcasm. They appeared in the public journals, and gained him such reputation, that even the papers of Junius were by some attributed to him.

In the questions which had risen between England and her colonies, he had strongly advocated the cause of the latter; and it was the feelings thus excited, and the recollections, perhaps of his early campaigns, that had recently brought him to America. Here he had arrived in the latter part of 1773, had visited various parts of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia, taking an active part in the political agitations of the country. His caustic attacks upon the ministry; his conversational powers and his poignant sallies, had gained him great reputation; but his military renown rendered him especially interesting at the present juncture. A general, who had served in the famous campaigns of Europe, commanded Cossacks, fought with Turks, talked with Frederick the Great, and been aide-de-camp to the king of Poland, was a prodigious acquisition to the patriot cause! On the other hand, his visit to Boston was looked upon with uneasiness by the British officers, who knew his adventurous character. It was surmised that he was exciting a spirit of revolt, with a view to putting himself at its head. These suspicions found their way into the London papers, and alarmed the British cabinet. "Have an attention to his conduct," writes Lord Dartmouth to Gage, "and take every legal method to prevent his effecting any of those dangerous purposes he is said to have in view."

Lee when subsequently informed of these suspicions, scoffed at them in a letter to his friend, Edmund Burke, and declared that he had not the "temerity and vanity" to aspire to the aims imputed to him.

"To think myself qualified for the most important charge that ever was committed to mortal man," writes he, "is the last stage of presumption; nor do I think the Americans would or ought to confide in a man, let his qualifications be

ever so great, who has no property among them. It is true I most devoutly wish them success in the glorious struggle; that I have expressed my wishes both in writing and *viva voce*; but my errand to Boston was mere curiosity to see a people in so singular circumstances; and I had likewise an ambition to be acquainted with some of their leading men; with them only I associated during my stay in Boston. Our ingenious gentlemen in the camp, therefore, very naturally concluded my design was to put myself at their head."

To resume the course of events at Boston. Gage on the 1st of September, before this popular agitation, had issued writs for a general election, to be held at Salem in October; seeing, however, the irritated state of the public mind, he now countermanded the same by proclamation. The people, disregarding the countermand, carried the election, and ninety of the new members thus elected met at the appointed time. They waited a whole day for the governor to attend, administer the oaths, and open the session; but as he did not make his appearance, they voted themselves a provincial congress, and chose for president of it John Hancock,—a man of great wealth, popular and somewhat showy talents and ardent patriotism, and eminent from his social position.

This self-constituted body adjourned to Concord, about twenty miles from Boston; quietly assumed supreme authority, and issued a remonstrance to the governor, virtually calling him to account for his military operations in fortifying Boston Neck, and collecting warlike stores about him, thereby alarming the fears of the whole province, and menacing the lives and property of the Bostonians.

General Gage, overlooking the irregularity of its organization, entered into explanations with the Assembly, but failed to give satisfaction. As winter approached, he found his situation more and more critical. Boston was the only place in Massachusetts that now contained British forces, and it had become the refuge of all the "*tories*" of the province; that is to say, of all those devoted to the British government. There was animosity between them and the principal inhabitants, among whom revolutionary principles prevailed. The town itself, almost insulated by

nature, and surrounded by a hostile country, was like a place besieged.

The provincial Congress conducted its affairs with the order and system so formidable to General Gage. Having adopted a plan for organizing the militia, it had nominated general officers, two of whom, Artemas Ward and Seth Pomeroy, had accepted.

The executive powers were vested in a committee of safety. This was to determine when the services of the militia were necessary; was to call them forth,—to nominate their officers to the Congress,—to commision them, and direct the operations of the army. Another committee was appointed to furnish supplies to the forces when called out; hence named the Committee of Supplies.

Under such auspices, the militia went on arming and disciplining itself in every direction. They associated themselves in large bodies, and engaged, verbally or by writing, to assemble in arms at the shortest notice for the common defence, subject to the orders of the committee of safety.

Arrangements had been made for keeping up an active correspondence between different parts of the country, and spreading an alarm in case of any threatening danger. Under the direction of the committees just mentioned, large quantities of military stores had been collected and deposited at Concord and Worcester.

This semi-belligerent state of affairs in Massachusetts produced a general restlessness throughout the land. The weak-hearted apprehended coming troubles; the resolute prepared to brave them. Military measures, hitherto confined to New England, extended to the middle and southern provinces, and the roll of the drum resounded through the villages.

Virginia was among the first to buckle on its armour. It had long been a custom among its inhabitants to form themselves into independent companies, equipped at their own expense, having their own peculiar uniform, and electing their own officers, though holding themselves subject to militia law. They had hitherto been self-disciplined; but now they continually resorted to Washington for instruction and advice; considering him the highest

authority on military affairs. He was frequently called from home, therefore, in the course of the winter and spring, to different parts of the country to review independent companies; all of which were anxious to put themselves under his command as field-officer.

Mount Vernon, therefore, again assumed a military tone as in former days, when he took his first lessons there in the art of war. He had his old campaigning associates with him occasionally, Dr. Craik and Captain Hugh Mercer, to talk of past scenes and discuss the possibility of future service. Mercer was already bestirring himself in disciplining the militia about Fredericksburg, where he resided.

Two occasional and important guests at Mount Vernon, in this momentous crisis, were General Charles Lee, of whom we have just spoken, and Major Horatio Gates. As the latter is destined to occupy an important page in this memoir, we will give a few particulars concerning him. He was an Englishman by birth, the son of a captain in the British army. Horace Walpole, whose christian name he bore, speaks of him in one of his letters as his godson, though some have insinuated that he stood in filial relationship of a less sanctified character. He had received a liberal education, and, when but twenty-one years of age, had served as a volunteer under General Edward Cornwallis, Governor of Halifax. He was afterwards captain of a New York independent company, with which, it may be remembered, he marched in the campaign of Braddock, in which he was severely wounded. For two or three subsequent years he was with his company in the western part of the province of New York, receiving the appointment of brigade-major. He accompanied General Monckton as aide-de-camp to the West Indies, and gained credit at the capture of Martinico. Being despatched to London with tidings of the victory, he was rewarded by the appointment of major to a regiment of foot; and afterwards, as a special mark of royal favour, a majority in the Royal Americans. His promotion did not equal his expectations and fancied deserts. He was married, and wanted something more lucrative, so he sold out on half-pay and became an applicant for some profitable post under government,

which he hoped to obtain through the influence of General Monckton and some friends in the aristocracy. Thus several years were passed, partly with his family in retirement, partly in London, paying court to patrons and men in power, until finding there was no likelihood of success, and having sold his commission and half-pay, he emigrated to Virginia in 1772, a disappointed man; purchased an estate in Berkeley County, beyond the Blue Ridge; espoused the popular cause, and renewed his old campaigning acquaintance with Washington.

He was now about forty-six years of age, of a florid complexion and goodly presence, though a little inclined to corpulency; social, insinuating, and somewhat specious in his manners, with a strong degree of self-approbation. A long course of solicitation; haunting public offices and antechambers, and "knocking about town," had taught him, it was said, how to wheedle and flatter, and accommodate himself to the humours of others, so as to be the boon companion of gentlemen, and "hail fellow well met" with the vulgar.

Lee, who was an old friend and former associate in arms, had recently been induced by him to purchase an estate in his neighbourhood in Berkeley County with a view to making it his abode, having a moderate competency, a claim to land on the Ohio, and the half-pay of a British colonel. Both of these officers, disappointed in the British service, looked forward probably to greater success in the patriot cause.

Lee had been at Philadelphia since his visit to Boston, and had made himself acquainted with the leading members of Congress during the session. He was evidently cultivating an intimacy with every one likely to have influence in the approaching struggle.

To Washington the visits of these gentlemen were extremely welcome at this juncture, from their military knowledge and experience, especially as much of it had been acquired in America, in the same kind of warfare, if not the very same campaigns in which he himself had mingled. Both were interested in the popular cause. Lee was full of plans for the organization and disciplining of the militia, and occasionally accompanied Washington in his attendance

on provincial reviews. He was subsequently very efficient at Annapolis in promoting and superintending the organization of the Maryland militia.

It is doubtful whether the visits of Lee were as interesting to Mrs. Washington as to the general. He was whimsical, eccentric, and at times almost rude; negligent also, slovenly in person and attire; for though he had occasionally associated with kings and princes, he had also campaigned with Mohawks and Cossacks, and seems to have relished their "good breeding." What was still more annoying in a well-regulated mansion, he was always followed by a legion of dogs, which shared his affections with his horses, and took their seats by him when at table. "I must have some object to embrace," said he misanthropically. "When I can be convinced that men are as worthy objects as dogs, I shall transfer my benevolence, and become as staunch a philanthropist as the canting Addison affected to be."[4]

In his passion for horses and dogs, Washington, to a certain degree, could sympathize with him, and had noble specimens of both in his stable and kennel, which Lee doubtless inspected with a learned eye. During the season in question, Washington, according to his diary, was occasionally in the saddle at an early hour following the fox-hounds. It was the last time for many a year that he was to gallop about his beloved hunting-grounds of Mount Vernon and Belvoir.

In the month of March the second Virginia convention was held at Richmond. Washington attended as delegate from Fairfax County. In this assembly, Patrick Henry, with his usual ardour and eloquence, advocated measures for embodying, arming and disciplining a militia force, and providing for the defence of the colony. "It is useless," said he, "to address further petitions to government, or to await the effect of those already addressed to the throne. The time for supplication is passed; the time for action is at hand. We must fight, Mr. Speaker," exclaimed he emphatically; "I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms, and to the God of Hosts, is all that is left us!"

[4] Lee to Adams. Life and Works of Adams, ii., 414.

Washington joined him in the conviction, and was one of a committee that reported a plan for carrying those measures into effect. He was not an impulsive man to raise the battle cry, but the executive man to marshal the troops into the field, and carry on the war.

His brother, John Augustine, was raising and disciplining an independent company; Washington offered to accept the command of it, *should occasion require it to be drawn out*. He did the same with respect to an independent company at Richmond. "It is my full intention, if needful," writes he to his brother, "*to devote my life and fortune to the cause.*" [5]

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Infatuation in British Councils—Colonel Grant, the Braggart—Coercive Measures—Expedition against the Military Magazine at Concord—Battle of Lexington—The Cry of Blood through the Land—Old Soldiers of the French War—John Stark—Israel Putnam—Rising of the Yeomanry—Measures of Lord Dunmore in Virginia—Indignation of the Virginians—Hugh Mercer and the Friends of Liberty—Arrival of the News of Lexington at Mount Vernon—Effect on Bryan Fairfax, Gates, and Washington.

While the spirit of revolt was daily gaining strength and determination in America, a strange infatuation reigned in British councils. While the wisdom and eloquence of Chatham were exerted in vain in behalf of American rights, an empty braggadocio, elevated to a seat in Parliament, was able to captivate the attention of the members, and influence their votes by gross misrepresentations of the Americans and their cause. This was no other than Colonel Grant, the same shallow soldier who, exceeding his instructions, had been guilty of a foolhardy bravado before the walls of Fort Duquesne, which brought slaughter and defeat upon his troops. From misleading the army, he was now promoted to a station where he might mislead the councils of his country. We are told that he entertained Parliament, especially the ministerial side of the House, with ludicrous stories of the cowardice of Americans. He

[5] Letter to John Augustine. Sparks, ii., 405.

had served with them, he said, and knew them well, and would venture to say that they would never dare to face an English army; that they were destitute of every requisite to make good soldiers, and that a very slight force would be sufficient for their complete reduction. With five regiments, he could march through all America!

How often has England been misled to her cost by such slanderous misrepresentations of the American character! Grant talked of having served with the Americans; had he already forgotten that in the field of Braddock's defeat, when the British regulars fled, it was alone the desperate stand of a handful of Virginians, which covered their disgraceful flight, and saved them from being overtaken and massacred by the savages?

This taunting and braggart speech of Grant was made in the face of the conciliatory bill of the venerable Chatham, devised with a view to redress the wrongs of America. The councils of the arrogant and scornful prevailed; and instead of the proposed bill, further measures of a stringent nature were adopted, coercive of some of the middle and southern colonies, but ruinous to the trade and fisheries of New England.

At length the bolt, so long suspended, fell! The troops at Boston had been augmented to about four thousand men. Goaded on by the instigations of the tories, and alarmed by the energetic measures of the whigs, General Gage now resolved to deal the latter a crippling blow. This was to surprise and destroy their magazine of military stores at Concord, about eighteen miles from Boston. It was to be effected on the night of the 18th of April, by a force detached for the purpose.

Preparations were made with great secrecy. Boats for the transportation of the troops were launched, and moored under the sterns of the men-of-war. Grenadiers and light infantry were relieved from duty, and held in readiness. On the 18th, officers were stationed on the roads leading from Boston, to prevent any intelligence of the expedition getting into the country. At night orders were issued by General Gage that no person should leave the town. About ten o'clock, from eight to nine hundred men, grenadiers, light infantry, and marines, commanded by lieutenant-

colonel Smith, embarked in the boats at the foot of Boston Common, and crossed to Lechmere Point, in Cambridge, whence they were to march silently, and without beat of drum, to the place of destination.

The measures of General Gage had not been shrouded in all the secrecy he imagined. Mystery often defeats itself by the suspicions it awakens. Dr. Joseph Warren, one of the committee of safety, had observed the preparatory disposition of the boats and troops, and surmised some sinister intention. He sent notice of these movements to John Hancock and Samuel Adams, fellow-members of the committee of safety, and at that time at Lexington, attending the Provincial Congress. A design on the magazine at Concord was suspected, and the committee of safety ordered that the cannon collected there should be secreted, and part of the stores removed.

On the night of the 18th, Dr. Warren sent off two messengers by different routes to give the alarm that the king's troops were actually sallying forth. The messengers got out of Boston just before the order of General Gage went into effect, to prevent any one from leaving the town. About the same time a lantern was hung out of an upper window of the north church, in the direction of Charlestown. This was a preconcerted signal to the patriots of that place, who instantly despatched swift messengers to rouse the country.

In the mean time, Colonel Smith set out on his nocturnal march from Lechmere's Point by an unfrequented path across marshes, where at times the troops had to wade through water. He had proceeded but a few miles when alarm guns, booming through the night air, and the clang of village bells, showed that the news of his approach was travelling before him, and the people were rising. He now sent back to General Gage for a reinforcement, while Major Pitcairne was detached with six companies to press forward, and secure the bridges at Concord.

Pitcairne advanced rapidly, capturing every one that he met or overtook. Within a mile and a half of Lexington, however, a horseman was too quick on the spur for him, and galloping to the village, gave the alarm that the redcoats were coming. Drums were beaten; guns fired. By

the time that Pitcairne entered the village, about seventy or eighty of the yeomanry, in military array, were mustered on the green near the church. It was a part of the "constitutional army," pledged to resist by force any open hostility of British troops. Beside these, there were a number of lookers on, armed and unarmed.

The sound of drum, and the array of men in arms, indicated a hostile determination. Pitcairne halted his men within a short distance of the church, and ordered them to prime and load. They then advanced at double quick time. The major, riding forward, waved his sword, and ordered the rebels, as he termed them, to disperse. Other of the officers echoed his words as they advanced: "Disperse, ye villains! Lay down your arms, ye rebels, and disperse!" The orders were disregarded. A scene of confusion ensued, with firing on both sides; which party commenced it, has been a matter of dispute. Pitcairne always maintained that, finding the militia would not disperse, he turned to order his men to draw out and surround them, when he saw a flash in the pan from the gun of a countryman posted behind a wall, and almost instantly the report of two or three muskets. These he supposed to be from the Americans, as his horse was wounded, as was also a soldier close by him. His troops rushed on, and a promiscuous fire took place, though, as he declared, he made repeated signals with his sword for his men to forbear.

The firing of the Americans was irregular, and without much effect; that of the British was more fatal. Eight of the patriots were killed, and ten wounded, and the whole put to flight. The victors formed on the common, fired a volley, and gave three cheers for one of the most inglorious and disastrous triumphs ever achieved by British arms.

Colonel Smith soon arrived with the residue of the detachment, and they all marched on towards Concord, about six miles distant.

The alarm had reached that place in the dead hour of the preceding night. The church bell roused the inhabitants. They gathered together in anxious consultation. The militia and minute men seized their arms, and repaired to the parade-ground, near the church. Here they were

subsequently joined by armed yeomanry from Lincoln and elsewhere. Exertions were now made to remove and conceal the military stores. A scout, who had been sent out for intelligence, brought word that the British had fired upon the people at Lexington, and were advancing upon Concord. There was great excitement and indignation, Part of the militia marched down the Lexington road to meet them, but returned, reporting their force to be three times that of the Americans. The whole of the militia now retired to an eminence about a mile from the centre of the town, and formed themselves into two battalions.

About seven o'clock the British came in sight, advancing with quick step, their arms glittering in the morning sun. They entered in two divisions by different roads. Concord is traversed by a river of the same name, having two bridges, the north and the south. The grenadiers and light infantry took post in the centre of the town, while strong parties of light troops were detached to secure the bridges, and destroy the military stores. Two hours were expended in the work of destruction without much success, so much of the stores having been removed or concealed. During all this time the yeomanry from the neighbouring towns were hurrying in with such weapons as were at hand, and joining the militia on the height, until the little cloud of war gathering there numbered about four hundred and fifty.

About ten o'clock a body of three hundred undertook to dislodge the British from the north bridge. As they approached, the latter fired upon them, killing two, and wounding a third. The patriots returned the fire with spirit and effect. The British retreated to the main body, the Americans pursuing them across the bridge.

By this time all the military stores which could be found had been destroyed; Colonel Smith, therefore, made preparations for a retreat. The scattered troops were collected, the dead were buried, and conveyances procured for the wounded. About noon he commenced his retrograde march for Boston. It was high time. His troops were jaded by the night march, and the morning's toils and skirmishings.

The country was thoroughly alarmed. The yeomanry

were hurrying from every quarter to the scene of action. As the British began their retreat the Americans began the work of sore and galling retaliation. Along the open road the former were harassed incessantly by rustic marksmen, who took deliberate aim from behind trees or over stone fences. Where the road passed through woods, the British found themselves between two fires, dealt by unseen foes, the minute men having posted themselves on each side among the bushes. It was in vain they threw out flankers, and endeavoured to dislodge their assailants; each pause gave time for other pursuers to come within reach, and open attacks from different quarters. For several miles they urged their way along woody defiles, or roads skirted with fences and stone walls, the retreat growing more and more disastrous; some were shot down, some gave out through mere exhaustion; the rest hurried on, without stopping to aid the fatigued or wounded. Before reaching Lexington Colonel Smith received a severe wound in the leg, and the situation of the retreating troops was becoming extremely critical, when, about two o'clock, they were met by Lord Percy, with a brigade of one thousand men and two field-pieces. His lordship had been detached from Boston about nine o'clock by General Gage, in compliance with Colonel Smith's urgent call for a reinforcement, and had marched gaily through Roxbury to the tune of "Yankee Doodle," in derision of the "rebels." He now found the latter a more formidable foe than he had anticipated. Opening his brigade to the right and left, he received the retreating troops into a hollow square; where, fainting and exhausted, they threw themselves on the ground to rest. His lordship showed no disposition to advance upon their assailants, but contented himself with keeping them at bay with his field-pieces, which opened a vigorous fire from an eminence.

Hitherto the Provincials, being hasty levies without a leader, had acted from individual impulse, without much concert; but now General Heath was upon the ground. He was one of those authorized to take command when the minute men should be called out. That class of combatants promptly obeyed his orders, and he was efficacious in rallying them, and bringing them into military order,

when checked and scattered by the fire of the field-pieces.

Dr. Warren, also, arrived on horseback, having spurred from Boston on receiving news of the skirmishing. In the subsequent part of the day he was one of the most active and efficient men in the field. His presence, like that of General Heath, regulated the infuriated ardour of the militia, and brought it into system.

Lord Percy, having allowed the troops a short interval for repose and refreshment, continued the retreat toward Boston. As soon as he got under march, the galling assault by the pursuing yeomanry was recommenced in flank and rear. The British soldiery, irritated in turn, acted as if in an enemy's country. Houses and shops were burnt down in Lexington; private dwellings along the road were plundered, and their inhabitants maltreated. In one instance, an unoffending invalid was wantonly slain in his own house. All this increased the exasperation of the yeomanry. There was occasional sharp skirmishing, with bloodshed on both sides, but in general a dogged pursuit, where the retreating troops were galled at every step. Their march became more and more impeded by the number of their wounded. Lord Percy narrowly escaped death from a musket-ball, which struck off a button of his waistcoat. One of his officers remained behind, wounded, in West Cambridge. His ammunition was failing as he approached Charlestown. The provincials pressed upon him in rear, others were advancing from Roxbury, Dorchester, and Milton; Colonel Pickering, with the Essex militia, seven hundred strong, was at hand; there was danger of being intercepted in the retreat to Charlestown. The field-pieces were again brought into play to check the ardour of the pursuit; but they were no longer objects of terror. The sharpest firing of the provincials was near Prospect Hill, as the harassed enemy hurried along the Charlestown road, eager to reach the Neck, and get under cover of their ships. The pursuit terminated a little after sunset, at Charlestown Common, where General Heath brought the minute men to a halt. Within half an hour more a powerful body of men, from Marblehead and Salem, came up to join in the chase.

"If the retreat," writes Washington, "had not been as precipitate as it was,—and God knows it could not well have been more so,—the ministerial troops must have surrendered, or been totally cut off."

The distant firing from the mainland had reached the British at Boston. The troops which, in the morning, had marched through Roxbury, to the tune of "Yankee Doodle," might have been seen at sunset hounded along the old Cambridge road to Charlestown Neck, by mere armed yeomanry. Gage was astounded at the catastrophe. It was but a short time previous that one of his officers, in writing to friends in England, scoffed at the idea of the Americans taking up arms. "Whenever it comes to blows," said he, "he that can run the fastest will think himself well off, believe me. Any two regiments here ought to be decimated if they did not beat in the field the whole force of the Massachusetts province." How frequently, throughout this Revolution, had the English to pay the penalty of thus undervaluing the spirit they were provoking!

In this memorable affair the British loss was seventy-three killed, one hundred and seventy-four wounded, and twenty-six missing. Among the slain were eighteen officers. The loss of the Americans was forty-nine killed, thirty-nine wounded, and five missing. This was the first blood shed in the revolutionary struggle; a mere drop in amount, but a deluge in its effects,—rending the colonies for ever from the mother country.

The cry of blood from the field of Lexington went through the land. None felt the appeal more than the old soldiers of the French war. It roused John Stark, of New Hampshire—a trapper and hunter in his youth, a veteran in Indian warfare, a campaigner under Abercrombie and Amherst, now the military oracle of a rustic neighbourhood. Within ten minutes after receiving the alarm, he was spurring towards the sea-coast, and on the way stirring up the volunteers of the Massachusetts borders, to assemble forthwith at Bedford, in the vicinity of Boston.

Equally alert was his old comrade in frontier exploits, Colonel Israel Putnam. A man on horseback, with a drum, passed through his neighbourhood in Connecticut,

proclaiming British violence at Lexington. Putnam was in the field ploughing, assisted by his son. In an instant the team was unyoked; the plough left in the furrow; the lad sent home to give word of his father's departure; and Putnam, on horseback, in his working garb, urging with all speed to the camp. Such was the spirit aroused throughout the country. The sturdy yeomanry, from all parts, were hastening toward Boston with such weapons as were at hand; and happy was he who could command a rusty fowling-piece and a powder-horn.

The news reached Virginia at a critical moment. Lord Dunmore, obeying a general order issued by the ministry to all the provincial governors, had seized upon the military munitions of the province. Here was a similar measure to that of Gage. The cry went forth that the subjugation of the colonies was to be attempted. All Virginia was in combustion. The standard of liberty was reared in every county; there was a general cry to arms. Washington was looked to, from various quarters, to take command. His old comrade in arms, Hugh Mercer, was about marching down to Williamsburg, at the head of a body of resolute men, seven hundred strong, entitled "The friends of constitutional liberty and America," whom he had organized and drilled in Fredericksburg, and nothing but a timely concession of Lord Dunmore, with respect to some powder which he had seized, prevented his being beset in his palace.

Before Hugh Mercer and the Friends of Liberty disbanded themselves, they exchanged a mutual pledge to reassemble at a moment's warning, whenever called on to defend the liberty and rights of this or any other sister colony.

Washington was at Mount Vernon, preparing to set out for Philadelphia as a delegate to the second Congress, when he received tidings of the affair of Lexington. Bryan Fairfax and Major Horatio Gates were his guests at the time. They all regarded the event as decisive in its consequences; but they regarded it with different feelings. The worthy and gentle-spirited Fairfax deplored it deeply. He foresaw that it must break up all his pleasant relations in life; arraying his dearest friends

against the government to which, notwithstanding the errors of its policy, he was loyally attached and resolved to adhere.

Gates, on the contrary, viewed it with the eye of a soldier and a place-hunter—hitherto disappointed in both capacities. This event promised to open a new avenue to importance and command, and he determined to enter upon it.

Washington's feelings were of a mingled nature. They may be gathered from a letter to his friend and neighbour, George William Fairfax, then in England, in which he lays the blame of this "deplorable affair" on the ministry and their military agents, and concludes with the following words, in which the yearnings of the patriot give affecting solemnity to the implied resolve of the soldier:—"Unhappy it is to reflect that a brother's sword has been sheathed in a brother's breast; and that the once happy and peaceful plains of America are to be either drenched with blood or inhabited by slaves. Sad alternative! *But can a virtuous man hesitate in his choice?*"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Enlisting of Troops in the East—Camp at Boston—General Artemas Ward—Scheme to surprise Ticonderoga—New Hampshire Grants—Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys—Benedict Arnold—Affair of Ticonderoga and Crown Point—A Dash at St. John's.

At the eastward, the march of the Revolution went on with accelerated speed. Thirty thousand men had been deemed necessary for the defence of the country. The provincial Congress of Massachusetts resolved to raise thirteen thousand six hundred as its quota. Circular letters, also, were issued by the committee of safety, urging the towns to enlist troops with all speed, and calling for military aid from the other New England provinces.

Their appeals were promptly answered. Bodies of militia, and parties of volunteers from New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, hastened to join the minute men of Massachusetts in forming a camp in the neighbourhood of Boston. With the troops of Connecticut came Israel Putnam; having recently raised a regiment in that pro-

vince, and received from its Assembly the commission of brigadier-general. Some of his old comrades in French and Indian warfare had hastened to join his standard. Such were two of his captains, Durkee and Knowlton. The latter, who was his especial favourite, had fought by his side when a mere boy.

The command of the camp was given to General Artemas Ward, already mentioned. He was a native of Shrewsbury, in Massachusetts, and a veteran of the seven years' war—having served as lieutenant-colonel under Abercrombie. He had, likewise, been a member of the legislative bodies, and had recently been made, by the provincial Congress of Massachusetts, commander-in-chief of its forces.

As affairs were now drawing to a crisis, and war was considered inevitable, some bold spirits in Connecticut conceived a project for the outset. This was the surprisal of the old forts of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, already famous in the French war. Their situation on Lake Champlain gave them the command of the main route to Canada, so that the possession of them would be all important in case of hostilities. They were feebly garrisoned and negligently guarded, and abundantly furnished with artillery and military stores, so much needed by the patriot army.

This scheme was set on foot in the purlieus, as it were of the provincial legislature of Connecticut, then in session. It was not openly sanctioned by that body, but secretly favoured, and money lent from the treasury to those engaged in it. A committee was appointed, also, to accompany them to the frontier, aid them in raising troops, and exercise over them a degree of superintendence and control.

Sixteen men were thus enlisted in Connecticut, a greater number in Massachusetts, but the greatest accession of force was from what was called the "New Hampshire Grants." This was a region having the Connecticut River on one side and Lake Champlain and the Hudson River on the other—being, in fact, the country forming the present State of Vermont. It had long been a disputed territory, claimed by New York and New Hampshire. George II. had decided in favour of New York; but the Governor of New Hampshire had made grants of between one and two

hundred townships in it, whence it had acquired the name of the New Hampshire Grants. The settlers on those grants resisted the attempts of New York to eject them, and formed themselves into an association called "The Green Mountain Boys." Resolute, strong-handed fellows they were, with Ethan Allen at their head, a native of Connecticut, but brought up among the Green Mountains. He and his lieutenants, Seth Warner and Remember Baker, were outlawed by the legislature of New York, and rewards offered for their apprehension. They and their associates armed themselves, set New York at defiance, and swore they would be the death of any one who should attempt their arrest.

Thus Ethan Allen was becoming a kind of Robin Hood among the mountains, when the present crisis changed the relative position of things as if by magic. Boundary feuds were forgotten amid the great questions of colonial rights. Ethan Allen at once stepped forward, a patriot, and volunteered with his Green Mountain Boys to serve in the popular cause. He was well fitted for the enterprise in question by his experience as a frontier champion, his robustness of mind and body, and his fearless spirit. He had a kind of rough eloquence, also, that was very effective with his followers. "His style," says one, who knew him personally, "was a singular compound of local barbarisms, scriptural phrases, and oriental wildness; and though unclassic, and sometimes ungrammatical, was highly animated and forcible." Washington, in one of his letters, says there was "an original something in him which commanded admiration."

Thus reinforced, the party, now two hundred and seventy strong, pushed forward to Castleton, a place within a few miles of the head of Lake Champlain. Here a council of war was held on the 2nd of May. Ethan Allen was placed at the head of the expedition, with James Easton and Seth Warner as second and third in command. Detachments were sent off to Skenesborough (now Whitehall), and another place on the lake, with orders to seize all the boats they could find and bring them to Shoreham, opposite Ticonderoga, whither Allen prepared to proceed with the main body.

At this juncture another adventurous spirit arrived at Castleton. This was Benedict Arnold, since so sadly renowned. He, too, had conceived the project of surprising Ticonderoga and Crown Point; or, perhaps, had caught the idea from its first agitators in Connecticut,—in the militia of which province he held a captain's commission. He had proposed the scheme to the Massachusetts committee of safety. It had met with their approbation. They had given him a colonel's commission, authorized him to raise a force in Western Massachusetts not exceeding four hundred men, and furnished him with money and means. Arnold had enlisted but a few officers and men when he heard of the expedition from Connecticut being on the march. He instantly hurried on with one attendant to overtake it, leaving his few recruits to follow, as best they could: in this way he reached Castleton just after the council of war.

Producing the colonel's commission received from the Massachusetts committee of safety, he now aspired to the supreme command. His claims were disregarded by the Green Mountain Boys; they would follow no leader but Ethan Allen. As they formed the majority of the party, Arnold was fain to acquiesce, and serve as a volunteer, with the rank, but not the command of colonel.

The party arrived at Shoreham, opposite Ticonderoga, on the night of the 9th of May. The detachment sent in quest of boats had failed to arrive. There were a few boats at hand, with which the transportation was commenced. It was slow work; the night wore away; day was about to break, and but eighty-three men, with Allen and Arnold, had crossed. Should they wait for the residue, day would dawn, the garrison wake, and their enterprise might fail. Allen drew up his men, addressed them in his own emphatic style, and announced his intention to make a dash at the fort, without waiting for more force. "It is a desperate attempt," said he, "and I ask no man to go against his will. I will take the lead, and be the first to advance. You that are willing to follow, poise your firelocks." Not a firelock but was poised.

They mounted the hill briskly, but in silence, guided by a boy from the neighbourhood. The day dawned as Allen

arrived at a sally port. A sentry pulled trigger on him, but his piece missed fire. He retreated through a covered way. Allen and his men followed. Another sentry thrust at Easton with his bayonet, but was struck down by Allen, and begged for quarters. They were granted on condition of his leading the way instantly to the quarters of the commandant, Captain Delaplace, who was yet in bed. Being arrived there, Allen thundered at the door, and demanded a surrender of the fort. By this time his followers had formed into two lines on the parade-ground, and given three hearty cheers. The commandant appeared at his door half-dressed, "the frightened face of his pretty wife peering over his shoulder." He gazed at Allen in bewildered astonishment. "By whose authority do you act?" exclaimed he. "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!" replied Allen, with a flourish of his sword, and an oath which we do not care to subjoin.

There was no disputing the point. The garrison, like the commander, had been startled from sleep, and made prisoners as they rushed forth in their confusion. A surrender accordingly took place. The captain, and forty-eight men, which composed his garrison, were sent prisoners to Hartford, in Connecticut. A great supply of military and naval stores, so important in the present crisis, was found in the fortress.

Colonel Seth Warner, who had brought over the residue of the party from Shoreham, was now sent with a detachment against Crown Point, which surrendered on the 12th of May, without firing a gun; the whole garrison being a sergeant and twelve men. Here were taken upward of a hundred cannon.

Arnold now insisted vehemently on his right to command Ticonderoga; being, as he said, the only officer invested with legal authority. His claims had again to yield to the superior popularity of Ethan Allen, to whom the Connecticut committee, which had accompanied the enterprise, gave an instrument in writing, investing him with the command of the fortress, and its dependencies, until he should receive the orders of the Connecticut Assembly, or the Continental Congress. Arnold, while forced to

acquiesce, sent a protest, and a statement of his grievances to the Massachusetts Legislature. In the mean time, his chagrin was appeased by a new project. The detachment originally sent to seize upon boats at Skenesborough, arrived with a schooner, and several batteaux. It was immediately concerted between Allen and Arnold to cruise in them down the lake, and surprise St. John's, on the Sorel River, the frontier post of Canada. The schooner was accordingly armed with cannon from the fort. Arnold, who had been a seaman in his youth, took the command of her, while Allen and his Green Mountain Boys embarked in the batteaux.

Arnold outsailed the other craft, and arriving at St. John's, surprised and made prisoners of a sergeant and twelve men; captured a king's sloop of seventy tons, with two brass six-pounders and seven men; took four batteaux, destroyed several others, and then, learning that troops were on the way from Montreal and Chamblee, spread all his sails to a favouring breeze, and swept up the lake with his prizes and prisoners, and some valuable stores, which he had secured.

He had not sailed far when he met Ethan Allen and the batteaux. Salutes were exchanged; cannon on one side, musketry on the other. Allen boarded the sloop; learnt from Arnold the particulars of his success, and determined to push on, take possession of St. John's, and garrison it with one hundred of his Green Mountain Boys. He was foiled in the attempt by the superior force which had arrived; so he returned to his station at Ticonderoga.

Thus a partisan band, unpractised in the art of war, had, by a series of daring exploits, and almost without the loss of a man, won for the patriots the command of Lakes George and Champlain, and thrown open the great highway to Canada.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Second Session of Congress—John Hancock—Petition to the King—Federal Union—Military Measures—Debates about the Army—Question as to Commander-in-Chief—Appointment of Washington—Other Appointments—Letters of Washington to his Wife and Brother—Preparations for Departure.

THE second General Congress assembled at Philadelphia on the 10th of May. Peyton Randolph was again elected as president; but being obliged to return, and occupy his place as speaker of the Virginia Assembly, John Hancock, of Massachusetts, was elevated to the chair.

A lingering feeling of attachment to the mother country, struggling with the growing spirit of self-government, was manifested in the proceedings of this remarkable body. Many of those most active in vindicating colonial rights, and Washington among the number, still indulged the hope of an eventual reconciliation, while few entertained, or, at least, avowed the idea of complete independence.

A second "humble and dutiful" petition to the king was moved, but met with strong opposition. John Adams condemned it as an imbecile measure, calculated to embarrass the proceedings of Congress. He was for prompt and vigorous action. Other members concurred with him. Indeed, the measure itself seemed but a mere form, intended to reconcile the half-scrupulous, for subsequently, when it was carried, Congress, in face of it, went on to assume and exercise the powers of a sovereign authority. A federal union was formed, leaving to each colony the right of regulating its internal affairs according to its own individual constitution, but vesting in Congress the power of making peace or war; of entering into treaties and alliances; of regulating general commerce; in a word, of legislating on all such matters as regarded the security and welfare of the whole community.

The executive power was to be vested in a council of twelve, chosen by Congress from among its own members, and to hold office for a limited time. Such colonies as had not sent delegates to Congress might yet become members of the confederacy by agreeing to its conditions. Georgia,

which had hitherto hesitated, soon joined the league, which thus extended from Nova Scotia to Florida.

Congress lost no time in exercising their federated powers. In virtue of them they ordered the enlistment of troops, the construction of forts in various parts of the colonies, the provision of arms, ammunition, and military stores; while to defray the expense of these and other measures, avowedly of self-defence, they authorized the emission of notes to the amount of three millions of dollars, bearing the inscription of "The United Colonies;" the faith of the confederacy being pledged for their redemption.

A retaliating decree was passed, prohibiting all supplies of provisions to the British fisheries; and another, declaring the province of Massachusetts Bay absolved from its compact with the crown, by the violation of its charter, and recommending it to form an internal government for itself.

The public sense of Washington's military talents and experience was evinced in his being chairman of all the committees appointed for military affairs. Most of the rules and regulations for the army, and the measures for defence, were devised by him.

The situation of the New England army, actually besieging Boston, became an early and absorbing consideration. It was without munitions of war, without arms, clothing, or pay; in fact, without legislative countenance or encouragement. Unless sanctioned and assisted by Congress, there was danger of its dissolution. If dissolved, how could another be collected? If dissolved, what would there be to prevent the British from sallying out of Boston, and spreading desolation throughout the country?

All this was the subject of much discussion out of doors. The disposition to uphold the army was general, but the difficult question was who should be commander-in-chief? Adams, in his diary, gives us glimpses of the conflict of opinions and interests within doors. There was a southern party, he said, which could not brook the idea of a New England army, commanded by a New England general. "Whether this jealousy was sincere," writes he, "or whether it was mere pride, and a haughty ambition of fur-

nishing a southern general to command the northern army, I cannot say; but the intention was very visible to me, that Colonel Washington was their object; and so many of our stanchest men were in the plan, that we could carry nothing without conceding to it. There was another embarrassment, which was never publicly known, and which was carefully concealed by those who knew it; the Massachusetts and other New England delegates were divided. Mr. Hancock and Mr. Cushing hung back, Mr. Paine did not come forward, and even Mr. Samuel Adams was irresolute. Mr. Hancock himself had an ambition to be appointed commander-in-chief. Whether he thought an election a compliment due to him, and intended to have the honour of declining it, or whether he would have accepted it, I know not. To the compliment he had some pretensions; for, at that time, his exertions, sacrifices, and general merits in the cause of his country had been incomparably greater than those of Colonel Washington. But the delicacy of his health, and his entire want of experience in actual service, though an excellent militia officer, were decisive objections to him in my mind."

General Charles Lee was at that time in Philadelphia. His former visit had made him well acquainted with the leading members of Congress. The active interest he had manifested in the cause was well known, and the public had an almost extravagant idea of his military qualifications. He was of foreign birth, however, and it was deemed improper to confide the supreme command to any but a native-born American. In fact, if he was sincere in what we have quoted from his letter to Burke, he did not aspire to such a signal mark of confidence.

The opinion evidently inclined in favour of Washington, yet it was promoted by no clique of partisans or admirers. More than one of the Virginia delegates, says Adams, were cool on the subject of this appointment, and particularly Mr. Pendleton was clear and full against it. It is scarcely necessary to add, that Washington in this, as in every other situation in life, made no step in advance to clutch the impending honour.

Adams, in his diary, claims the credit of bringing the members of Congress to a decision. Rising in his place

one day, and stating briefly, but earnestly, the exigencies of the case, he moved that Congress should adopt the army at Cambridge, and appoint a general. Though this was not the time to nominate the person, "yet," adds he, "as I had reason to believe this was a point of some difficulty, I had no hesitation to declare that I had but one gentleman in my mind for that important command, and that was a gentleman from Virginia, who was among us and very well known to all of us; a gentleman, whose skill and experience as an officer, whose independent fortune, great talents, and excellent universal character would command the approbation of all America, and unite the cordial exertions of all the colonies better than any other person in the Union. Mr. Washington, who happened to sit near the door, as soon as he heard me allude to him, from his usual modesty, darted into the library-room. Mr. Hancock who was our president, which gave me an opportunity to observe his countenance, while I was speaking on the state of the colonies, the army at Cambridge, and the enemy, heard me with visible pleasure; but when I came to describe Washington for the commander, I never remarked a more sudden and striking change of countenance. Mortification and resentment were expressed as forcibly as his face could exhibit them."

"When the subject came under debate, several delegates opposed the appointment of Washington, not from personal objections, but because the army were all from New England, and had a general of their own, General Artemas Ward, with whom they appeared well satisfied, and under whose command they had proved themselves able to imprison the British army in Boston, which was all that was to be expected or desired."

The subject was postponed to a future day. In the interim pains were taken out of doors to obtain a unanimity, and the voices were in general so clearly in favour of Washington, that the dissentient members were persuaded to withdraw their opposition.

On the 15th of June the army was regularly adopted by Congress, and the pay of the commander-in-chief fixed at five hundred dollars a month. Many still clung to the idea that in all these proceedings they were merely oppo-

sing the measures of the ministry, and not the authority of the crown, and thus the army before Boston was designated as the Continental Army, in contradistinction to that under General Gage, which was called the Ministerial Army.

In this stage of the business Mr. Johnson, of Maryland, rose, and nominated Washington for the station of commander-in-chief. The election was by ballot, and was unanimous. It was formally announced to him by the president on the following day, when he had taken his seat in Congress. Rising in his place, he briefly expressed his high and grateful sense of the honour conferred on him, and his sincere devotion to the cause. "But," added he, "lest some unlucky event should happen unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare, with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honoured with. As to pay, I beg leave to assure the Congress that, as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit of it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those, I doubt not, they will discharge, and that is all I desire."

"There is something charming to me in the conduct of Washington," writes Adams to a friend; "a gentleman of one of the first fortunes upon the continent, leaving his delicious retirement, his family and friends, sacrificing his ease, and hazarding all in the cause of his country. His views are noble and disinterested. He declared, when he accepted the mighty trust, that he would lay before us an exact account of his expenses, and not accept a shilling of pay."

Four major-generals were to be appointed. Among those specified were General Charles Lee and General Ward. Mr. Mifflin, of Philadelphia, who was Lee's especial friend and admirer, urged that he should be second in command. "General Lee," said he, "would serve cheerfully under Washington; but considering his rank, character, and experience, could not be expected to serve under any other. He must be *aut secundus, aut nullus.*

Adams, on the other hand, as strenuously objected that it would be a great deal to expect that General Ward, who was actually in command of the army in Boston, should serve under any man, but under a stranger he ought not to serve. General Ward, accordingly, was elected the second in command, and Lee the third. The other two major-generals were Philip Schuyler, of New York, and Israel Putnam, of Connecticut. Eight brigadier-generals were likewise appointed; Seth Pomeroy, Richard Montgomery, David Wooster, William Heath, Joseph Spencer, John Thomas, John Sullivan, and Nathaniel Greene.

Notwithstanding Mr. Mifflin's objection to having Lee ranked under Ward, as being beneath his dignity and merits, he himself made no scruple to acquiesce; though, judging from his supercilious character, and from circumstances in his subsequent conduct, he no doubt considered himself vastly superior to the provincial officers placed over him.

At Washington's express request, his old friend, Major Horatio Gates, then absent at his estate in Virginia, was appointed adjutant-general, with the rank of brigadier.

Adams, according to his own account, was extremely loth to admit either Lee or Gates into the American service, although he considered them officers of great experience and confessed abilities. He apprehended difficulties, he said, from the "natural prejudices and virtuous attachment of our countrymen to their own officers. But," adds he, "considering the earnest desire of General Washington to have the assistance of those officers, the extreme attachment of many of our best friends in the southern colonies to them, the reputation they would give to our arms in Europe, and especially with the ministerial generals and army in Boston, as well as the real American merit of both, I could not withhold my vote from either."

The reader will possibly call these circumstances to mind when, on a future page, he finds how Lee and Gates requited the friendship to which chiefly they owed their appointments.

In this momentous change in his condition, which suddenly altered all his course of life, and called him immediately to the camp, Washington's thoughts recurred

to Mount Vernon and its rural delights, so dear to his heart, whence he was to be again exiled. His chief concern, however, was on account of the distress it might cause to his wife. His letter to her on the subject is written in a tone of manly tenderness. "You may believe me," writes he, "when I assure you, in the most solemn manner, that so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavour in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity; and I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose. * * * *

"I shall rely confidently on that Providence which has heretofore preserved, and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the Fall. I shall feel no pain from the toil or danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg that you will summon your whole fortitude, and pass your time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen."

And to his favourite brother, John Augustine, he writes: "I am now to bid adieu to you, and to every kind of domestic ease, for a while. I am embarked on a wide ocean, boundless in its prospect, and in which, perhaps, no safe harbour is to be found. I have been called upon by the unanimous voice of the colonies to take the command of the continental army; an honour I neither sought after nor desired, as I am thoroughly convinced that it requires greater abilities, and much more experience, than I am master of." And subsequently, referring to his wife: "I shall hope that my friends will visit, and endeavour to keep up the spirits of my wife as much as they can, for my departure will, I know, be a cutting stroke upon her; and on this account alone I have many disagreeable sensations."

On the 20th of June, he received his commission from the president of Congress. The following day was fixed upon for his departure for the army. He reviewed previously, at the request of their officers, several militia companies of horse and foot. Every one was anxious to see the new commander, and rarely has the public *beau ideal* of a commander been so fully answered. He was now in the vigour of his days, forty-three years of age, stately in person, noble in his demeanour, calm and dignified in his deportment; as he sat his horse, with manly grace, his military presence delighted every eye, and wherever he went the air rang with acclamations.

CHAPTER XL.

More Troops arrive at Boston—Generals Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton—Proclamation of Gage—Nature of the American Army—Scornful Conduct of the British Officers—Project of the Americans to seize upon Breed's Hill—Putnam's opinion of it—Sanctioned by Prescott—Nocturnal March of the Detachment—Fortifying of Bunker's Hill—Break of day, and astonishment of the Enemy.

While Congress had been deliberating on the adoption of the army, and the nomination of a commander-in-chief, events had been thickening and drawing to a crisis in the excited region about Boston. The provincial troops which blockaded the town prevented supplies by land, the neighbouring country refused to furnish them by water; fresh provisions and vegetables were no longer to be procured, and Boston began to experience the privations of a besieged city.

On the 25th of May, arrived ships of war and transports from England, bringing large reinforcements, under Generals Howe, Burgoyne, and Henry Clinton, commanders of high reputation.

As the ships entered the harbour, and the "rebel camp" was pointed out, ten thousand yeomanry beleaguering a town garrisoned by five thousand regulars, Burgoyne could not restrain a burst of surprise and scorn. "What!" cried he, "ten thousand peasants keep five thousand king's troops shut up! Well, let us get in, and we'll soon find elbow room."

Inspirited by these reinforcements, General Gage determined to take the field. Previously, however, in conformity to instructions from Lord Dartmouth, the head of the war department, he issued a proclamation (12th June), putting the province under martial law, threatening to treat as rebels and traitors all malcontents who should continue under arms, together with their aiders and abettors; but offering pardon to all who should lay down their arms, and return to their allegiance. From this proffered amnesty, however, John Hancock and Samuel Adams were especially excepted; their offences being pronounced "too flagitious not to meet with condign punishment."

This proclamation only served to put the patriots on the alert against such measures as might be expected to follow, and of which their friends in Boston stood ready to apprise them. The besieging force in the mean time, was daily augmented by recruits and volunteers, and now amounted to about fifteen thousand men distributed at various points. Its character and organization were peculiar. As has well been observed, it could not be called a national army, for, as yet, there was no nation to own it; it was not under the authority of the Continental Congress, the act of that body recognizing it not having as yet been passed, and the authority of that body itself not having been acknowledged. It was, in fact, a fortuitous assemblage of four distinct bodies of troops, belonging to different provinces, and each having a leader of its own election. About ten thousand belonged to Massachusetts, and were under the command of General Artemas Ward, whose head-quarters were at Cambridge. Another body of troops, under Colonel John Stark, already mentioned, came from New Hampshire. Rhode Island furnished a third, under the command of General Nathaniel Greene. A fourth was from Connecticut, under the veteran Putnam.

These bodies of troops, being from different colonies, were independent of each other, and had their several commanders. Those from New Hampshire were instructed to obey General Ward as commander-in-chief; with the rest it was a voluntary act, rendered in consideration of his being military chief of Massachusetts, the province which, as allies, they came to defend. There was, in fact,

but little organization in the army. Nothing kept it together, and gave it unity of action, but a common feeling of exasperated patriotism.

The troops knew but little of military discipline. Almost all were familiar with the use of fire-arms in hunting and fowling; many had served in frontier campaigns against the French, and in "bush-fighting" with the Indians; but none were acquainted with regular service or the discipline of European armies. There was a regiment of artillery, partly organized by Colonel Gridley, a skilful engineer, and furnished with nine field-pieces; but the greater part of the troops were without military dress or accoutrements; most of them were hasty levies of yeomanry, some of whom had seized their rifles and fowling-pieces, and turned out in their working-clothes and homespun country garbs. It was an army of volunteers, subordinate through inclination and respect to officers of their own choice, and depending for sustenance on supplies sent from their several towns.

Such was the army spread over an extent of ten or twelve miles, and keeping watch upon the town of Boston, containing at that time a population of seventeen thousand souls, and garrisoned with more than ten thousand British troops, disciplined and experienced in the wars of Europe.

In the disposition of these forces, General Ward had stationed himself at Cambridge, with the main body of about nine thousand men and four companies of artillery. Lieutenant-general Thomas, second in command, was posted, with five thousand Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island troops, and three or four companies of artillery, at Roxbury and Dorchester, forming the right wing of the army: while the left, composed in a great measure of New Hampshire troops, stretched through Medford to the hills of Chelsea.

It was a great annoyance to the British officers and soldiers, to be thus hemmed in by what they termed a rustic rout with calico frocks and fowling-pieces. The same scornful and taunting spirit prevailed among them, that the cavaliers of yore indulged toward the Covenanters. Considering episcopacy as the only loyal and royal faith, they insulted and desecrated the "sectarian" places of worship. One was turned into a riding school for the cavalry, and

the fire in the stove was kindled with books from the library of its pastor. The Provincials retaliated by turning the Episcopal church at Cambridge into a barrack, and melting down its organ-pipes into bullets.

Both parties panted for action; the British through impatience of their humiliating position, and an eagerness to chastise what they considered the presumption of their besiegers; the Provincials through enthusiasm in their cause, a thirst for enterprise and exploit, and, it must be added, an unconsciousness of their own military deficiencies.

We have already mentioned the peninsula of Charlestown (called from a village of the same name), which lies opposite to the north side of Boston. The heights, which swell up in rear of the village, overlook the town and shipping. The project was conceived in the besieging camp to seize and occupy those heights. A council of war was held upon the subject. The arguments in favour of the attempt were, that the army was anxious to be employed; that the country was dissatisfied with its inactivity, and that the enemy might thus be drawn out to ground where they might be fought to advantage. General Putnam was one of the most strenuous in favour of the measure.

Some of the more wary and judicious, among whom were General Ward and Dr. Warren, doubted the expediency of intrenching themselves on those heights, and the possibility of maintaining so exposed a post, scantily furnished, as they were, with ordnance and ammunition. Besides, it might bring on a general engagement, which it was not safe to risk.

Putnam made light of the danger. He was confident of the bravery of the militia if intrenched, having seen it tried in the old French war. "The Americans," said he, "are never afraid of their heads; they only think of their legs; shelter them, and they'll fight for ever." He was seconded by General Pomeroy, a leader of like stamp, and another veteran of the French war. He had been a hunter in his time; a dead shot with a rifle, and was ready to lead troops against the enemy, "with five cartridges to a man."

The daring councils of such men are always captivating to the inexperienced; but in the present instance, they were sanctioned by one whose opinion in such matters, and in

this vicinity, possessed peculiar weight. This was Colonel William Prescott, of Pepperell, who commanded a regiment of minute men. He, too, had seen service in the French war, and acquired reputation as a lieutenant of infantry at the capture of Cape Breton. This was sufficient to constitute him an oracle in the present instance. He was now about fifty years of age, tall and commanding in his appearance, and retaining the port of a soldier. What was more, he had a military garb; being equipped with a three-cornered hat, a top wig, and a single-breasted blue coat, with facings and lapped up at the skirts. All this served to give him consequence among the rustic militia officers with whom he was in council.

His opinion, probably, settled the question; and it was determined to seize on and fortify Bunker's Hill and Dorchester Heights. In deference, however, to the suggestions of the more cautious, it was agreed to postpone the measure until they were sufficiently supplied with the munitions of war to be able to maintain the heights when seized.

Secret intelligence hurried forward the project. General Gage, it was said, intended to take possession of Dorchester Heights on the night of the 18th of June. These heights lay on the opposite side of Boston, and the committee were ignorant of their localities. Those on Charlestown Neck, being near at hand, had some time before been reconnoitred by Colonel Richard Gridley, and other of the engineers. It was determined to seize and fortify these heights on the night of Friday, the 16th of June, in anticipation of the movement of General Gage. Troops were draughted for the purpose from the Massachusetts regiments of Colonels Prescott, Frye, and Bridges. There was also a fatigue party of about two hundred men from Putnam's Connecticut troops, led by his favourite officer, Captain Knowlton; together with a company of forty-nine artillery men with two field-pieces, commanded by Captain Samuel Gridley.

A little before sunset the troops, about twelve hundred in all, assembled on the common, in front of General Ward's quarters. They came provided with packs, blankets and provisions for four-and-twenty hours, but ignorant of the object of the expedition. Being all

paraded, prayers were offered up by the Reverend President Langdon, of Harvard College; after which they all set forward on their silent march.

Colonel Prescott, from his experience in military matters, and his being an officer in the Massachusetts line, had been chosen by General Ward to conduct the enterprise. His written orders were to fortify Bunker's Hill, and defend the works until he should be relieved. Colonel Richard Gridley, the chief engineer, who had likewise served in the French war, was to accompany him and plan the fortifications. It was understood that reinforcements and refreshments would be sent to the fatigue party in the morning.

The detachment left Cambridge about 9 o'clock, Colonel Prescott taking the lead, preceded by two sergeants with dark lanterns. At Charlestown Neck they were joined by Major Brooks, of Bridges' regiment, and General Putnam; and here were the waggons laden with intrenching tools, which first gave the men an indication of the nature of the enterprise.

Charlestown Neck is a narrow isthmus, connecting the peninsula with the main land; having the Mystic River, about half a mile wide, on the north, and a large embayment of Charles River on the south or right side.

It was now necessary to proceed with the utmost caution, for they were coming on ground over which the British kept jealous watch. They had erected a battery at Boston on Copp's Hill, immediately opposite to Charlestown. Five of their vessels of war were stationed so as to bear upon the peninsula from different directions, and the guns of one of them swept the isthmus, or narrow neck just mentioned.

Across this isthmus, Colonel Prescott conducted the detachment undiscovered, and, up the ascent of Bunker's Hill. This commences at the Neck, and slopes up for about three hundred yards to its summit, which is about one hundred and twelve feet high. It then declines toward the south, and is connected by a ridge with Breed's Hill, about sixty or seventy feet high. The crests of the two hills are about seven hundred yards apart.

On attaining the heights, a question rose which of the

two they should proceed to fortify. Bunker's Hill was specified in the written orders given to Colonel Prescott by General Ward, but Breed's Hill was much nearer to Boston, and had a better command of the town and shipping. Bunker's Hill, also, being on the upper and narrower part of the peninsula, was itself commanded by the same ship which raked the Neck. Putnam was clear for commencing at Breed's Hill, and making the principal work there, while a minor work might be thrown up at Bunker's Hill, as a protection in the rear, and a rallying point, in case of being driven out of the main work. Others concurred with this opinion, yet there was a hesitation in deviating from the letter of their orders. At length Colonel Gridley became impatient; the night was waning; delay might prostrate the whole enterprise. Breed's Hill was then determined on. Gridley marked out the lines for the fortifications; the men stocked their guns; threw off their packs; seized their trenching-tools, and set to work with great spirit; but so much time had been wasted in discussion, that it was midnight before they struck the first spade into the ground.

Prescott, who felt the responsibility of his charge, almost despaired of carrying on these operations undiscovered. A party was sent out by him silently to patrol the shore at the foot of the heights, and watch for any movement of the enemy. Not willing to trust entirely to the vigilance of others, he twice went down during the night to the water's edge; reconnoitering everything scrupulously, and noting every sight and sound. It was a warm, still, summer's night; the stars shone brightly, but everything was quiet. Boston was buried in sleep. The sentry's cry of "All's well" could be heard distinctly from its shores, together with the drowsy calling of the watch on board of the ships of war, and then all would relapse into silence. Satisfied that the enemy were perfectly unconscious of what was going on upon the hill, he returned to the works, and a little before daybreak called in the patrolling party.

So spiritedly, though silently, had the labour been carried on, that by morning a strong redoubt was thrown up as a main work, flanked on the left by a breastwork,

partly cannon-proof, extending down the crest of Breed's Hill to a piece of marshy ground called the Slough. To support the right of the redoubt, some troops were thrown into the village of Charlestown, at the southern foot of the hill. The great object of Prescott's solicitude was now attained, a sufficient bulwark to screen his men before they should be discovered; for he doubted the possibility of keeping raw recruits to their post, if openly exposed to the fire of artillery, and the attack of disciplined troops.

At dawn of day, the Americans at work were espied by the sailors on board of the ships of war, and the alarm was given. The captain of the Lively, the nearest ship, without waiting for orders, put a spring upon her cable, and bringing her guns to bear, opened a fire upon the hill. The other ships and a floating battery followed his example. Their shot did no mischief to the works, but one man, among a number who had incautiously ventured outside, was killed. A subaltern reported his death to Colonel Prescott, and asked what was to be done. "Bury him," was the reply. The chaplain gathered some of his military flock around him, and was proceeding to perform suitable obsequies over the "first martyr," but Prescott ordered that the men should disperse to their work, and the deceased be buried immediately. It seemed shocking to men accustomed to the funeral solemnities of peaceful life to bury a man without prayers, but Prescott saw that the sight of this man suddenly shot down had agitated the nerves of his comrades, unaccustomed to scenes of war. Some of them, in fact, quietly left the hill, and did not return to it.

To inspire confidence by example, Prescott now mounted the parapet, and walked leisurely about, inspecting the works, giving directions, and talking cheerfully with the men. In a little while they got over their dread of cannon-balls, and some even made them a subject of joke, or rather bravado; a species of sham courage occasionally manifested by young soldiers, but never by veterans.

The cannonading roused the town of Boston. General Gage could scarcely believe his eyes when he beheld on the opposite hill a fortification full of men, which had sprung up in the course of the night. As he reconnoitred it

through a glass from Copp's Hill, the tall figure of Prescott, in military garb, walking the parapet, caught his eye. "Who is that officer who appears in command?" asked he. The question was answered by Counsellor Willard, Prescott's brother-in-law, who was at hand, and recognized his relative. "Will he fight?" demanded Gage, quickly. "Yes, sir; he is an old soldier, and will fight to the last drop of blood; but I cannot answer for his men."

"The works must be carried!" exclaimed Gage.

He called a council of war. The Americans might intend to cannonade Boston from this new fortification; it was unanimously resolved to dislodge them. How was this to be done? A majority of the council, including Clinton and Grant, advised that a force should be landed on Charlestown Neck, under the protection of their batteries, so as to attack the Americans in rear, and cut off their retreat. General Gage objected that it would place his troops between two armies; one at Cambridge, superior in numbers, the other on the heights, strongly fortified. He was for landing in front of the works, and pushing directly up the hill; a plan adopted through a confidence that raw militia would never stand their ground against the assault of veteran troops; another instance of undervaluing the American spirit, which was to cost the enemy a lamentable loss of life.

CHAPTER XLI.

Battle of Bunker's Hill.

The sound of drum and trumpet, the clatter of hoofs, the rattling of gun-carriages, and all the other military din and bustle in the streets of Boston, soon apprised the Americans on their rudely fortified height of an impending attack. They were ill fitted to withstand it, being jaded by the night's labour and want of sleep; hungry and thirsty, having brought but scanty supplies, and oppressed by the heat of the weather. Prescott sent repeated messages to General Ward, asking reinforcements and provisions. Putnam seconded the request in person, urging the exigencies of the case. Ward hesitated. He feared to weaken

his main body at Cambridge, as his military stores were deposited there, and it might have to sustain the principal attack. At length, having taken advice of the council of safety, he issued orders for Colonels Stark and Read, then at Medford, to march to the relief of Prescott with their New Hampshire regiments. The orders reached Medford about eleven o'clock. Ammunition was distributed in all haste; two flints, a gill of powder, and fifteen balls to each man. The balls had to be suited to the different calibres of the guns; the powder to be carried in powder-horns, or loose in the pocket, for there were no cartridges prepared. It was the rude turn-out of yeoman soldiery destitute of regular accoutrements.

In the mean while, the Americans on Breed's Hill were sustaining the fire from the ships, and from the battery on Copp's Hill, which opened upon them about ten o'clock. They returned an occasional shot from one corner of the redoubt, without much harm to the enemy, and continued strengthening their position until about 11 o'clock, when they ceased to work, piled their intrenching tools in the rear, and looked out anxiously and impatiently for the anticipated reinforcements and supplies.

About this time General Putnam, who had been to head-quarters, arrived at the redoubt on horseback. Some words passed between him and Prescott with regard to the intrenching tools, which have been variously reported. The most probable version is, that he urged to have them taken from their present place, where they might fall into the hands of the enemy, and carried to Bunker's Hill, to be employed in throwing up a redoubt, which was part of the original plan, and which would be very important should the troops be obliged to retreat from Breed's Hill. To this Prescott demurred that those employed to convey them, and who were already jaded with toil, might not return to his redoubt. A large part of the tools were ultimately carried to Bunker's Hill, and a breastwork commenced by order of General Putnam. The importance of such a work was afterwards made apparent.

About noon the Americans descried twenty-eight barges crossing from Boston in parallel lines. They contained a large detachment of grenadiers, rangers, and light infantry,

admirably equipped, and commanded by Major-general Howe. They made a splendid and formidable appearance with their scarlet uniforms, and the sun flashing upon muskets and bayonets, and brass field-pieces. A heavy fire from the ships and batteries covered their advance, but no attempt was made to oppose them, and they landed about 1 o'clock at Moulton's Point, a little to the north of Breed's Hill.

Here General Howe made a pause. On reconnoitering the works from this point, the Americans appeared to be much more strongly posted than he had imagined. He descried troops also hastening to their assistance. These were the New Hampshire troops, led on by Stark. Howe immediately sent over to General Gage for more forces, and a supply of cannon-balls; those brought by him being found, through some egregious oversight, too large for the ordnance. While awaiting their arrival, refreshments were served out to the troops, with "grog," by the bucketful; and tantalizing it was, to the hungry and thirsty provincials, to look down from their ramparts of earth, and see their invaders seated in groups upon the grass eating and drinking, and preparing themselves by a hearty meal for the coming encounter. Their only consolation was to take advantage of the delay, while the enemy were carousing to strengthen their position. The breastwork on the left of the redoubt extended to what was called the Slough, but beyond this, the ridge of the hill, and the slope towards Mystic River, were undefended, leaving a pass by which the enemy might turn the left flank of the position, and seize upon Bunker's Hill. Putnam ordered his chosen officer, Captain Knowlton, to cover this pass with the Connecticut troops under his command. A novel kind of rampart, savouring of rural device, was suggested by the rustic general. About six hundred feet in the rear of the redoubt, and about one hundred feet to the left of the breastwork, was a post and rail-fence, set in a low foot-wall of stone, and extending down to Mystic River. The posts and rails of another fence were hastily pulled up, and set a few feet in behind this, and the intermediate space was filled up with new-mown hay from the adjacent meadows. This double fence, it will be found, proved an

important protection to the redoubt, although there still remained an unprotected interval of about seven hundred feet.

While Knowlton and his men were putting up this fence, Putnam proceeded with other of his troops to throw up the work on Bunker's Hill, despatching his son, Captain Putnam, on horseback, to hurry up the remainder of his men from Cambridge. By this time his compeer in French and Indian warfare, the veteran Stark, made his appearance with the New Hampshire troops, five hundred strong. He had grown cool and wary with age, and his march from Medford, a distance of five or six miles, had been in character. He led his men at a moderate pace to bring them into action fresh and vigorous. In crossing the Neck, which was enfiladed by the enemy's ships and batteries, Captain Dearborn, who was by his side, suggested a quick step. The veteran shook his head: "One fresh man in action is worth ten tired ones," replied he, and marched steadily on.

Putnam detained some of Stark's men to aid in throwing up the works on Bunker's Hill, and directed him to reinforce Knowlton with the rest. Stark made a short speech to his men now that they were likely to have warm work. He then pushed on, and did good service that day at the rustic bulwark.

About two o'clock, Warren arrived on the heights, ready to engage in their perilous defence, although he had opposed the scheme of their occupation. He had recently been elected a major-general, but had not received his commission; like Pomeroy, he came to serve in the ranks with a musket on his shoulder. Putnam offered him the command at the fence; he declined it, and merely asked where he could be of most service as a volunteer. Putnam pointed to the redoubt, observing there he would be under cover. "Don't think I seek a place of safety," replied Warren, quickly; "where will the attack be hottest?" Putnam still pointed to the redoubt. "That is the enemy's object; if that can be maintained, the day is ours."

Warren was cheered by the troops as he entered the redoubt. Colonel Prescott tendered him the command. He again declined. "I have come to serve only as a

volunteer, and shall be happy to learn from a soldier of your experience." Such were the noble spirits assembled on these perilous heights.

The British now prepared for a general assault. An easy victory was anticipated; the main thought was, how to make it most effectual. The left wing, commanded by General Pigot, was to mount the hill and force the redoubt, while General Howe, with the right wing, was to push on between the fort and Mystic River, turn the left flank of the Americans, and cut off their retreat.

General Pigot, accordingly, advanced up the hill under cover of a fire from field-pieces and howitzers planted on a small height near the landing-place on Moulton's Point. His troops commenced a discharge of musketry while yet at a long distance from the redoubts. The Americans within the works, obedient to strict command, retained their fire until the enemy were within thirty or forty paces, when they opened upon them with a tremendous volley. Being all marksmen, accustomed to take deliberate aim, the slaughter was immense, and especially fatal to officers. The assailants fell back in some confusion; but, rallied on by their officers, advanced within pistol shot. Another volley, more effective than the first, made them again recoil. To add to their confusion, they were galled by a flanking fire from the handful of provincials posted in Charlestown. Shocked at the carnage, and seeing the confusion of his troops, General Pigot was urged to give the word for a retreat.

In the meanwhile, General Howe, with the left wing, advanced along Mystic River towards the fence where Stark, Read, and Knowlton were stationed, thinking to carry this slight breastwork with ease, and so get in the rear of the fortress. His artillery proved of little avail, being stopped by a swampy piece of ground, while his columns suffered from two or three field-pieces with which Putnam had fortified the fence. Howe's men kept up a fire of musketry as they advanced; but, not taking aim, their shot passed over the heads of the Americans. The latter had received the same orders with those in the redoubt, not to fire until the enemy should be within thirty paces. Some few transgressed the command. Putnam rode up

and swore he would cut down the next man that fired contrary to orders. When the British arrived within the stated distance a sheeted fire opened upon them from rifles, muskets, and fowling-pieces, all levelled with deadly aim. The carnage, as in the other instance, was horrible. The British were thrown into confusion and fell back; some even retreated to the boats.

There was a general pause on the part of the British. The American officers availed themselves of it to prepare for another attack, which must soon be made. Prescott mingled among his men in the redoubt, who were all in high spirits at the severe check they had given "the regulars." He praised them for their stedfastness in maintaining their post, and their good conduct in reserving their fire until the word of command, and exhorted them to do the same in the next attack.

Putnam rode about Bunker's Hill and its skirts, to rally and bring on reinforcements which had been checked or scattered in crossing Charlestown Neck by the raking fire from the ships and batteries. Before many could be brought to the scene of action the British had commenced their second attack. They again ascended the hill to storm the redoubt; their advance was covered as before by discharges of artillery. Charlestown, which had annoyed them on their first attack by a flanking fire, was in flames, by shells thrown from Copp's Hill, and by marines from the ships. Being built of wood, the place was soon wrapped in a general conflagration. The thunder of artillery from batteries and ships, the bursting of bomb-shells; the sharp discharges of musketry; the shouts and yells of the combatants; the crash of burning buildings, and the dense volumes of smoke, which obscured the summer sun, all formed a tremendous spectacle. "Sure I am," said Burgoyne in one of his letters,—"Sure I am nothing ever has or ever can be more dreadfully terrible than what was to be seen or heard at this time. The most incessant discharge of guns that ever was heard by mortal ears."

The American troops, although unused to war, stood undismayed amidst a scene where it was bursting upon them with all its horrors. Reserving their fire as before, until the enemy was close at hand, they again poured forth

repeated volleys with the fatal aim of sharpshooters. The British stood the first shock, and continued to advance; but the incessant stream of fire staggered them. Their officers remonstrated, threatened, and even attempted to goad them on with their swords, but the havoc was too deadly; whole ranks were mowed down; many of the officers were either slain or wounded, and among them several of the staff of General Howe. The troops again gave way and retreated down the hill.

All this passed under the eye of thousands of spectators of both sexes and all ages, watching from afar every turn of a battle in which the lives of those most dear to them were at hazard. The British soldiery in Boston gazed with astonishment and almost incredulity at the resolute and protracted stand of raw militia whom they had been taught to despise, and at the havoc made among their own veteran troops. Every convoy of wounded brought over to the town increased their consternation, and General Clinton, who had watched the action from Copp's Hill, embarking in a boat, hurried over as a volunteer, taking with him reinforcements.

A third attack was now determined on, though some of Howe's officers remonstrated, declaring it would be downright butchery. A different plan was adopted. Instead of advancing in front of the redoubt, it was to be taken in flank on the left, where the open space between the breastwork and the fortified fence presented a weak point. It having been accidentally discovered that the ammunition of the Americans was nearly expended, preparations were made to carry the works at the point of the bayonet; and the soldiery threw off their knapsacks, and some even their coats, to be more light for action.

General Howe, with the main body, now made a feint of attacking the fortified fence; but while a part of his force was thus engaged, the rest brought some of the field-pieces to enfilade the breastwork on the left of the redoubt. A raking fire soon drove the Americans out of this exposed place into the enclosure. Much damage, too, was done in the latter by balls which entered the sallyport.

The troops were now led on to assail the works; those who flinched were, as before, goaded on by the swords of the officers. The Americans again reserved their fire until

their assailants were close at hand, and then made a murderous volley, by which several officers were laid low, and General Howe himself was wounded in the foot. The British soldiery this time likewise reserved their fire and rushed on with fixed bayonet. Clinton and Pigot had reached the southern and eastern sides of the redoubt, and it was now assailed on three sides at once. Prescott ordered those who had no bayonets to retire to the back part of the redoubt and fire on the enemy as they showed themselves on the parapet. The first who mounted exclaimed in triumph, "The day is ours!" He was instantly shot down, and so were several others who mounted about the same time. The Americans, however, had fired their last round, their ammunition was exhausted; and now succeeded a desperate and deadly struggle, hand to hand, with bayonets, stones, and the stocks of their muskets. At length, as the British continued to pour in, Prescott gave the order to retreat. His men had to cut their way through two divisions of the enemy who were getting in rear of the redoubt, and they received a destructive volley from those who had formed on the captured works. By that volley fell the patriot Warren, who had distinguished himself throughout the action. He was among the last to leave the redoubt, and had scarce done so when he was shot through the head with a musket-ball, and fell dead on the spot.

While the Americans were thus slowly dislodged from the redoubt, Stark, Read, and Knowlton maintained their ground at the fortified fence; which, indeed, had been nobly defended throughout the action. Pomeroy distinguished himself here by his sharpshooting until his musket was shattered by a ball. The resistance at this hastily constructed work was kept up after the troops in the redoubt had given way, and until Colonel Prescott had left the hill; thus defeating General Howe's design of cutting off the retreat of the main body; which would have produced a scene of direful confusion and slaughter. Having effected their purpose, the brave associates at the fence abandoned their weak outpost, retiring slowly, and disputing the ground inch by inch, with a regularity remarkable in troops many of whom had never before been in action.

The main retreat was across Bunker's Hill, where Putnam had endeavoured to throw up a breastwork. The veteran, sword in hand, rode to the rear of the retreating troops, regardless of the balls whistling about him. His only thought was to rally them at the unfinished works. "Halt! make a stand here!" cried he, "we can check them yet. In God's name, form and give them one shot more."

Pomeroy, wielding his shattered musket as a truncheon, seconded him in his efforts to stay the torrent. It was impossible, however, to bring the troops to a stand. They continued on down the hill to the Neck and across it to Cambridge, exposed to a raking fire from the ships and batteries, and only protected by a single piece of ordnance. The British were too exhausted to pursue them; they contented themselves with taking possession of Bunker's Hill, were reinforced from Boston, and threw up additional works during the night.

We have collected the preceding facts from various sources, examining them carefully, and endeavouring to arrange them with scrupulous fidelity. We may appear to have been more minute in the account of the battle than the number of troops engaged would warrant; but it was one of the most momentous conflicts in our revolutionary history. It was the first regular battle between the British and the Americans, and most eventful in its consequences. The former had gained the ground for which they contended; but, if a victory, it was more disastrous and humiliating to them than an ordinary defeat. They had ridiculed and despised their enemy, representing them as dastardly and inefficient; yet here their best troops, led on by experienced officers, had repeatedly been repulsed by an inferior force of that enemy,—mere yeomanry,—from works thrown up in a single night, and had suffered a loss rarely paralleled in battle with the most veteran soldiery; for, according to their own returns, their killed and wounded, out of a detachment of two thousand men, amounted to one thousand and fifty-four, and a large proportion of them officers. The loss of the Americans did not exceed four hundred and fifty.

To the latter this defeat, if defeat it might be called, had

the effect of a triumph. It gave them confidence in themselves and consequence in the eyes of their enemies. They had proved to themselves and to others that they could measure weapons with the disciplined soldiers of Europe, and inflict the most harm in the conflict.

Among the British officers slain was Major Pitcairne, who, at Lexington, had shed the first blood in the Revolutionary war.

In the death of Warren the Americans had to lament the loss of a distinguished patriot and a most estimable man. It was deplored as a public calamity. His friend Elbridge Gerry had endeavoured to dissuade him from risking his life in this perilous conflict. "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori," replied Warren, as if he had foreseen his fate—a fate to be envied by those ambitious of an honourable fame. He was one of the first who fell in the glorious cause of his country, and his name has become consecrated in its history.

There has been much discussion of the relative merits of the American officers engaged in this affair—a difficult question where no one appears to have had the general command. Prescott conducted the troops in the night enterprise; he superintended the building of the redoubt, and defended it throughout the battle; his name, therefore, will ever shine most conspicuous, and deservedly so, on this bright page of our Revolutionary history.

Putnam, also, was a leading spirit throughout the affair; one of the first to prompt and of the last to maintain it. He appears to have been active and efficient at every point; sometimes fortifying, sometimes hurrying up reinforcements; inspiriting the men by his presence while they were able to maintain their ground, and fighting gallantly at the outpost to cover their retreat. The brave old man, riding about in the heat of the action, on this sultry day, "with a hanger belted across his brawny shoulders, over a waistcoat without sleeves," has been sneered at by a contemporary, "as much fitter to head a band of sickle-men or ditchers than musketeers." But this very description illustrates his character, and identifies him with the times and the service. A yeoman warrior fresh from the plough, in the garb of rural labour;

a patriot brave and generous, but rough and ready, who thought not of himself in time of danger, but was ready to serve in any way, and to sacrifice official rank and self-glorification to the good of the cause. He was eminently a soldier for the occasion. His name has long been a favourite one with young and old; one of the talismanic names of the Revolution, the very mention of which is like the sound of a trumpet. Such names are the precious jewels of our history, to be garnered up among the treasures of the nation, and kept immaculate from the tarnishing breath of the cynic and the doubter.

CHAPTER XLII.

Departure from Philadelphia—Anecdotes of General Schuyler—of Lee—Tidings of Bunker Hill—Military Councils—Population of New York—The Johnson Family—Governor Tryon—Arrival at New York—Military Instructions to Schuyler—Arrival at the Camp.

In a preceding chapter we left Washington preparing to depart from Philadelphia for the army before Boston. He set out on horseback on the 21st of June, having for military companions of his journey Major-generals Lee and Schuyler, and being accompanied for a distance by several private friends. As an escort he had a "gentleman troop" of Philadelphia, commanded by Captain Markoe, the whole formed a brilliant cavalcade.

General Schuyler was a man eminently calculated to sympathize with Washington in all his patriotic views and feelings, and became one of his most faithful coadjutors. Sprung from one of the earliest and most respectable Dutch families which colonized New York, all his interests and affections were identified with the country. He had received a good education; applied himself at an early age to the exact sciences, and became versed in finance, military engineering, and political economy. He was one of those native-born soldiers who had acquired experience in that American school of arms, the old French war. When but twenty-two years of age he commanded a company of New York levies under Sir William Johnson, of Mohawk renown, which gave him an early opportunity of becoming acquainted with the Indian tribes, their

country and their policy. In 1758 he was in Abercrombie's expedition against Ticonderoga, accompanying Lord Viscount Howe as chief of the commissariat department; a post well qualified to give him experience in the business part of war. When that gallant young nobleman fell on the banks of Lake George, Schuyler conveyed his corpse back to Albany and attended to his honourable obsequies. Since the close of the French war he had served his country in various civil stations, and been one of the most zealous and eloquent vindicators of colonial rights. He was one of the "glorious minority" of the New York General Assembly; George Clinton, Colonel Woodhull, Colonel Philip Livingston, and others; who, when that body was timid and wavering, battled nobly against British influence and oppression. His last stand had been recently as a delegate to Congress, where he had served with Washington on the committee to prepare rules and regulations for the army, and where the latter had witnessed his judgment, activity, practical science, and sincere devotion to the cause.

Many things concurred to produce perfect harmony of operation between these distinguished men. They were nearly of the same age, Schuyler being one year the youngest. Both were men of agricultural, as well as military tastes. Both were men of property, living at their ease in little rural paradises; Washington on the grove-clad heights of Mount Vernon, Schuyler on the pastoral banks of the upper Hudson, where he had a noble estate at Saratoga, inherited from an uncle; and the old family mansion, near the city of Albany, half hid among ancestral trees. Yet both were exiling themselves from these happy abodes, and putting life and fortune at hazard in the service of their country.

Schuyler and Lee had early military recollections to draw them together. Both had served under Abercrombie in the expedition against Ticonderoga. There was some part of Lee's conduct in that expedition which both he and Schuyler might deem it expedient at this moment to forget. Lee was at that time a young captain, naturally presumptuous, and flushed with the arrogance of military power. On his march along the banks of the Hudson, he

acted as if in a conquered country; impressing horses and oxen, and seizing upon supplies, without exhibiting any proper warrant. It was enough for him, "they were necessary for the service of his troops." Should any one question his right, the reply was a volley of execrations.

Among those who experienced this soldierly treatment was Mrs. Schuyler, the aunt of the general; a lady of aristocratical station, revered throughout her neighbourhood. Her cattle were impressed, herself insulted. She had her revenge. After the unfortunate affair at Ticonderoga, a number of the wounded were brought down along the Hudson to the Schuyler mansion. Lee was among the number. The high-minded mistress of the house never alluded to his past conduct. He was received like his brother officers with the kindest sympathy. Sheets, and table-cloths were torn up to serve as bandages. Every thing was done to alleviate their sufferings. Lee's cynic heart was conquered. "He swore in his vehement manner that he was sure there would be a place reserved for Mrs. Schuyler in heaven, though no other woman should be there, and that he should wish for nothing better than to share her final destiny."[1]

Seventeen years had since elapsed, and Lee and the nephew of Mrs. Schuyler were again allied in military service, but under a different banner; and recollections of past times must have given peculiar interest to their present intercourse. In fact, the journey of Washington with his associate generals, experienced like him in the wild expeditions of the old French war, was a revival of early campaigning feelings.

They had scarcely proceeded twenty miles from Philadelphia when they were met by a courier, spurring with all speed, bearing despatches from the army to Congress, communicating tidings of the battle of Bunker's Hill. Washington eagerly inquired particulars; above all, how acted the militia? When told that they stood their ground bravely; sustained the enemy's fire—reserved their own until at close quarters, and then delivered it with deadly effect; it seemed as if a weight of doubt and solicitude were

[1] Memoirs of an American Lady (Mrs. Grant, of Laggan,) vol. ii., chap. ix.

lifted from his heart. "The liberties of the country are safe!" exclaimed he.

The news of the battle of Bunker's Hill had startled the whole country; and this clattering cavalcade, escorting the commander-in-chief to the army, was the gaze and wonder of every town and village.

The journey may be said to have been a continual council of war between Washington and the two generals. Even the contrast in character of the two latter made them regard questions from different points of view. Schuyler, a warm-hearted patriot, with everything staked on the cause; Lee, a soldier of fortune, indifferent to the ties of home and country, drawing his sword without enthusiasm; more through resentment against a government which had disappointed him, than zeal for liberty or for colonial rights.

One of the most frequent subjects of conversation was the province of New York. Its power and position rendered it the great link of the confederacy; what measures were necessary for its defence, and most calculated to secure its adherence to the cause? A lingering attachment to the crown, kept up by the influence of British merchants, and military and civil functionaries in royal pay, had rendered it slow in coming into the colonial compact; and it was only on the contemptuous dismissal of their statement of grievances, unheard, that its people had thrown off their allegiance, as much in sorrow as in anger.

No person was better fitted to give an account of the interior of New York than General Schuyler; and the hawk-eyed Lee during a recent sojourn had made its capital somewhat of a study; but there was much yet for both of them to learn.

The population of New York was more varied in its elements than that of almost any other of the provinces, and had to be cautiously studied. The New Yorkers were of a mixed origin, and stamped with the peculiarities of their respective ancestors. The descendants of the old Dutch and Huguenot families, the earliest settlers, were still among the soundest and best of the population. They inherited the love of liberty, civil and religious, of their forefathers, and were those who stood foremost in the present struggle for popular rights. Such were the Jays,

the Bensons, the Beekmans, the Hoffmans, the Van Hornes, the Roosevelts, the Duyckinks, the Pintards, the Yateses, and others whose names figure in the patriotic documents of the day. Some of them, doubtless, cherished a remembrance of the time when their forefathers were lords of the land, and felt an innate propensity to join in resistance to the government by which their supremacy had been overturned. A great proportion of the more modern families, dating from the downfall of the Dutch government in 1664, were English and Scotch, and among these were many loyal adherents to the crown. Then there was a mixture of the whole, produced by the intermarriages of upwards of a century, which partook of every shade of character and sentiment. The operations of foreign commerce, and the regular communications with the mother country through packets and ships of war, kept these elements in constant action, and contributed to produce that mercurial temperament, that fondness for excitement, and proneness to pleasure, which distinguished them from their neighbours on either side—the austere Puritans of New England, and the quiet "Friends" of Pennsylvania.

There was a power, too, of a formidable kind within the interior of the province, which was an object of much solicitude. This was the "Johnson Family." We have repeatedly had occasion to speak of Sir William Johnson, his majesty's general agent for Indian affairs, of his great wealth, and his almost sovereign sway over the Six Nations. He had originally received that appointment through the influence of the Schuyler family. Both Generals Schuyler and Lee, when young men, had campaigned with him; and it was among the Mohawk warriors, who rallied under his standard, that Lee had beheld his vaunted models of good-breeding.

In the recent difficulties between the crown and colonies, Sir William had naturally been in favour of the government which had enriched and honoured him, but he had viewed with deep concern the acts of Parliament which were goading the colonists to armed resistance. In the height of his solicitude, he received despatches ordering him, in case of hostilities, to enlist the Indians in the cause of government. To the agitation of feelings produced by

these orders many have attributed a stroke of apoplexy, of which he died, on the 11th of July, 1774, about a year before the time of which we are treattng.

His son and heir, Sir John Johnson, and his sons-in-law, Colonel Guy Johnson and Colonel Claus, felt none of the reluctance of Sir William to use harsh measures in support of royalty. They lived in a degree of rude feudal style in stone mansions capable of defence, situated on the Mohawk River and in its vicinity; they had many Scottish Highlanders for tenants; and among their adherents were violent men, such as the Butlers of Tryon county, and Brant, the Mohawk sachem, since famous in Indian warfare. They had recently gone about with armed retainers, overawing and breaking up patriotic assemblages, and it was known they could at any time bring a force of warriors in the field.

Recent accounts stated that Sir John was fortifying the old family hall at Johnstown with swivels, and had a hundred and fifty Roman Catholic Highlanders quartered in and about it, all armed and ready to obey his orders.

Colonel Guy Johnson, however, was the most active and zealous of the family. Pretending to apprehend a design on the part of the New England people to surprise and carry him off, he fortified his stone mansion on the Mohawk, called Guy's Park, and assembled there a part of his militia regiment, and other of his adherents, to the number of five hundred. He held a great Indian council there, likewise, in which the chiefs of the Six Nations recalled the friendship and good deeds of the late Sir William Johnson, and avowed their determination to stand by and defend every branch of his family.

As yet it was uncertain whether Colonel Guy really intended to take an open part in the appeal to arms. Should he do so, he would carry with him a great force of the native tribes, and might almost domineer over the frontier.

Tryon, the governor of New York, was at present absent in England, having been called home by the ministry to give an account of the affairs of the province, and to receive instructions for its management. He was a tory in heart, and had been a zealous opponent of all colonial movements, and his talents and address gave him great influence over

an important part of the community. Should he return with hostile instructions, and should he and the Johnsons co-operate, the one controlling the bay and harbour of New York and the waters of the Hudson by means of ships and land forces; the others overrunning the valley of the Mohawk and the regions beyond Albany with savage hordes, this great central province might be wrested from the confederacy. and all intercourse broken off between the eastern and southern colonies.

All these circumstances and considerations, many of which came under discussion in the course of this military journey, rendered the command of New York a post of especial trust and importance, and determined Washington to confide it to General Schuyler. He was peculiarly fitted for it by his military talents, his intimate knowledge of the province and its concerns, especially what related to the upper parts of it, and his experience in Indian affairs.

At Newark, in the Jerseys, Washington was met on the 25th by a committee of the provincial Congress, sent to conduct him tc the city. The Congress was in a perplexity. It had in a manner usurped and exercised the powers of Governor Tryon during his absence, while at the same time it professed allegiance to the crown which had appointed him. He was now in the harbour, just arrived from England, and hourly expected to land, Washington, too, was approaching. How were these double claims to ceremonious respect happening at the same time to be managed?

In this dilemma a regiment of militia was turned out, and the colonel instructed to pay military honours to whichever of the distinguished functionaries should first arrive. Washington was earlier than the governor by several hours, and received those honours. Peter Van Burgh Livingston, president of the New York Congress, next delivered a congratulatory address, the latter part of which evinces the cautious reserve with which, in these revolutionary times, military power was intrusted to an individual:—

"Confiding in you, sir, and in the worthy generals immediately under your command, we have the most flattering hopes of success in the glorious struggle for American liberty, and the fullest assurances that *whenever this important contest shall be decided by that fondest wish of each American soul, an accommodation with our mother country, you will cheerfully re-*

sign the important deposit committed into your hands, and reassume the character of our worthiest citizen."

The following was Washington's reply, in behalf of himself and his generals, to this part of the address :—

"As to the fatal, but necessary operations of war, when we assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen; and we shall most sincerely rejoice with you in that happy hour, when the establishment of American liberty on the most firm and solid foundations, shall enable us to return to our private stations, in the bosom of a free, peaceful, and happy country."

The landing of Governor Tryon took place about eight o'clock in the evening. The military honours were repeated, he was received with great respect by the mayor and common council, and transports of loyalty by those devoted to the crown. It was unknown what instructions he had received from the ministry, but it was rumoured that a large force would soon arrive from England, subject to his directions. At this very moment a ship of war, the Asia, lay anchored opposite the city; its grim batteries bearing upon it, greatly to the disquiet of the faint-hearted among its inhabitants,

In this situation of affairs Washington was happy to leave such an efficient person as General Schuyler in command of the place. According to his instructions, the latter was to make returns once a month, and oftener, should circumstances require it, to Washington, as commander-in-chief, and to the Continental Congress, of the forces under him, and the state of his supplies; and to send the earliest advices of all events of importance. He was to keep a wary eye on Colonel Guy Johnson, and to counteract any prejudicial influence he might exercise over the Indians. With respect to Governor Tryon, Washington hinted at a bold and decided line of conduct. "If forcible measures are judged necessary respecting the person of the governor, I should have no difficulty in ordering them, if the Continental Congress were not sitting; but as that is the case, *and the seizing of a governor quite a new thing*, I must refer you to that body for direction."

Had Congress thought proper to direct such a measure, Schuyler certainly would have been the man to execute it.

At New York, Washington had learned all the details of

the battle of Bunker's Hill; they quickened his impatience to arrive at the camp. He departed, therefore, on the 26th, accompanied by General Lee, and escorted as far as Kingsbridge, the termination of New York Island, by Markoe's Philadelphia light horse, and several companies of militia.

In the mean time the provincial Congress of Massachusetts, then in session at Watertown, had made arrangements for the expected arrival of Washington. The students of Harvard College having returned home on the breaking out of hostilities, the house of the president of that institution, at Cambridge, had been fitted up as head-quarters for the commander-in-chief and a temporary residence of Lee. The Congress had likewise sent on a deputation which met Washington at Springfield, on the frontiers of the province, and provided escorts and accommodations for him along the road. Thus honourably attended from town to town, and escorted by volunteer companies and cavalcades of gentlemen, he arrived at Watertown on the 2nd of July, where he was greeted by Congress with a congratulatory address, in which, however, was frankly stated the undisciplined state of the army he was summoned to command. An address of cordial welcome was likewise made to General Lee.

The ceremony over, Washington was again in the saddle, and escorted by a troop of light horse and a cavalcade of citizens, proceeded to the head-quarters provided for him at Cambridge, three miles distant. As he entered the confines of the camp the shouts of the multitude and the thundering of artillery gave note to the enemy beleaguered in Boston of his arrival.

His military reputation had preceded him and excited great expectations. They were not disappointed. His personal appearance, notwithstanding the dust of travel, was calculated to captivate the public eye. As he rode through the camp, amidst a throng of officers, he was the admiration of the soldiery and of a curious throng collected from the surrounding country. Happy was the countryman who could get a full view of him to carry home an account of it to his neighbours. "I have been much gratified this day with a view of General Washington," writes a contemporary chronicler. "His excellency was

on horseback, in company with several military gentlemen. It was not difficult to distinguish him from all others. He is tall and well proportioned, and his personal appearance truly noble and majestic."[2]

The fair sex were still more enthusiastic in their admiration, if we may judge from the following passage of a letter written by the intelligent and accomplished wife of John Adams to her husband: "Dignity, ease and complacency, the gentleman and the soldier, look agreeably blended in him. Modesty marks every line and feature of his face. Those lines of Dryden instantly occurred to me:

> "Mark his majestic fabric! He's a temple
> Sacred by birth, and built by hands divine;
> His soul's the deity that lodges there;
> Nor is the pile unworthy of the God."

With Washington, modest at all times, there was no false excitement on the present occasion; nothing to call forth emotions of self-glorification. The honours and congratulations with which he was received, the acclamations of the public, the cheerings of the army, only told him how much was expected from him; and when he looked round upon the raw and rustic levies he was to command, "a mixed multitude of people, under very little discipline, order, or government," scattered in rough encampments about hill and dale, beleaguering a city garrisoned by veteran troops, with ships of war anchored about its harbour, and strong outposts guarding it, he felt the awful responsibility of his situation, and the complicated and stupendous task before him. He spoke of it, however, not despondingly nor boastfully and with defiance; but with that solemn and sedate resolution, and that hopeful reliance on Supreme Goodness, which belonged to his magnanimous nature. The cause of his country, he observed, had called him to an active and dangerous duty, but *he trusted that Divine Providence, which wisely orders the affairs of men, would enablehim to discharge it with fidelity and success.*[3]

[2] Thacher.—Military Journal.
[3] Letter to Governor Trumbull.—Sparks, iii., 31.

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On the 3rd of July, the morning after his arrival at Cambridge, Washington took formal command of the army. It was drawn up on the Common about half a mile from head-quarters. A multitude had assembled there, for as yet military spectacles were novelties, and the camp was full of visitors, men, women, and children, from all parts of the country, who had relatives among the yeoman soldiery.

An ancient elm is still pointed out, under which Washington, as he arrived from head-quarters accompanied by General Lee and a numerous suite, wheeled his horse, and drew his sword as commander-in-chief of the armies. We have cited the poetical description of him furnished by the pen of Mrs. Adams; we give her sketch of his military compeer—less poetical, but no less graphic.

"General Lee looks like a careless, hardy veteran; and by his appearance brought to my mind his namesake, Charles XII. of Sweden. The elegance of his pen far exceeds that of his person."[1]

Accompanied by this veteran campaigner, on whose military judgment he had great reliance, Washington visited the different American posts, and rode to the heights, commanding views over Boston and its environs, being anxious to make himself acquainted with the strength and relative position of both armies: and here we will give a few particulars concerning the distinguished commanders with whom he was brought immediately in competition.

Congress, speaking of them reproachfully, observed, "Three of England's most experienced generals are sent to wage war with their fellow-subjects." The first here

[1] Mrs. Adams to John Adams, 1775.

alluded to was the Honourable William Howe, next in command to Gage. He was a man of a fine presence, six feet high, well proportioned, and of graceful deportment. He is said to have been not unlike Washington in appearance, though wanting his energy and activity. He lacked also his air of authority; but affability of manners, and a generous disposition, made him popular with both officers and soldiers.

There was a sentiment in his favour even among Americans at the time when he arrived at Boston. It was remembered that he was brother to the gallant and generous youth. Lord Howe, who fell in the flower of his days, on the banks of Lake George, and whose untimely death had been lamented throughout the colonies. It was remembered that the general himself had won reputation in the same campaign, commanding the light infantry under Wolfe, on the famous plains of Abraham. A mournful feeling had therefore gone through the country, when General Howe was cited as one of the British commanders, who had most distinguished themselves in the bloody battle of Bunker's Hill. Congress spoke of it with generous sensibility, in their address to the people of Ireland already quoted. "America is amazed," said they, "to find the name of Howe on the catalogue of her enemies—*she loved his brother!*"

General Henry Clinton, the next in command, was grandson of the Earl of Lincoln, and son of George Clinton, who had been Governor of the Province of New York for ten years, from 1743. The general had seen service on the continent in the Seven Years' War. He was of short stature, and inclined to corpulency; with a full face, and prominent nose. His manners were reserved, and altogether he was in strong contrast with Howe, and by no means so popular.

Burgoyne, the other British general of note, was natural son of Lord Bingley, and had entered the army at an early age. While yet a subaltern, he had made a runaway match with a daughter of the Earl of Derby, who threatened never to admit the offenders to his presence. In 1758, Burgoyne was a lieutenant-colonel of light dragoons. In 1761, he was sent with a force to aid the Portuguese

against the Spaniards, joined the army commanded by the Count de la Lippe, and signalized himself by surprising and capturing the town of Alcantara. He had since been elected to Parliament for the borough of Middlesex, and displayed considerable parliamentary talents. In 1772, he was made a major-general. His taste, wit, and intelligence, and his aptness at devising and promoting elegant amusements, made him for a time a leader in the gay world; though Junius accuses him of unfair practices at the gaming table. His reputation for talents and services had gradually mollified the heart of his father-in-law, the Earl of Derby. In 1774, he gave celebrity to the marriage of a son of the Earl with the Lady Betty Hamilton, by producing an elegant dramatic trifle, entitled, "The Maid of the Oaks," afterwards performed at Drury Lane, and honoured with a biting sarcasm by Horace Walpole. "There is a new puppet-show at Drury Lane," writes the wit, "as fine as the scenes can make it, and as dull as the author could not help making it."[1]

It is but justice to Burgoyne's memory to add, that, in after years, he produced a dramatic work, "The Heiress," which extorted even Walpole's approbation, who pronounced it the genteelest comedy in the English language.

Such were the three British commanders at Boston, who were considered especially formidable; and they had with them eleven thousand veteran troops, well appointed and well disciplined.

In visiting the different posts, Washington halted for a time at Prospect Hill, which, as its name denotes, commanded a wide view over Boston and the surrounding country. Here Putnam had taken his position after the battle of Bunker's Hill, fortifying himself with works which he deemed impregnable; and here the veteran was enabled to point out to the commander-in-chief, and to Lee, the main features of the belligerent region, which lay spread out like a map before them.

Bunker's Hill was but a mile distant to the west; the British standard floating as if in triumph on its summit. The main force under General Howe was intrenching

[1] Walpole to the Hon. W. S. Conway.

itself strongly about half a mile beyond the place of the recent battle. Scarlet uniforms gleamed about the hill; tents and marquees whitened its sides. All up there was bright, brilliant, and triumphant. At the base of the hill lay Charlestown in ashes, "nothing to be seen of that fine town but chimneys and rubbish."

Howe's sentries extended a hundred and fifty yards beyond the neck or isthmus, over which the Americans retreated after the battle. Three floating batteries in Mystic River commanded this isthmus, and a twenty-gun ship was anchored between the peninsula and Boston.

General Gage, the commander-in-chief, still had his head-quarters in the town, but there were few troops there besides Burgoyne's light-horse. A large force, however, was intrenched south of the town on the neck leading to Roxbury—the only entrance to Boston by land.

The American troops were irregularly distributed in a kind of semicircle eight or nine miles in extent; the left resting on Winter Hill, the most northern post; the right extending on the south to Roxbury and Dorchester Neck.

Washington reconnoitred the British posts from various points of view. Everything about them was in admirable order. The works appeared to be constructed with military science, the troops to be in a high state of discipline; the American camp, on the contrary, disappointed him. He had expected to find eighteen or twenty thousand men under arms; there were not much more than fourteen thousand. He had expected to find some degree of system and discipline, whereas all were raw militia. He had expected to find works scientifically constructed, and proofs of knowledge and skill in engineering; whereas, what he saw of the latter was very imperfect, and confined to the mere manual exercise of cannon. There was abundant evidence of aptness at trenching and throwing up rough defences; and in that way General Thomas had fortified Roxbury Neck, and Putnam had strengthened Prospect Hill. But the semicircular line which linked the extreme posts, was formed of rudely-constructed works, far too extensive for the troops which were at hand to man them.

Within this attenuated semicircle, the British forces lay concentrated and compact; and having command of the

water, might suddenly bring their main strength to bear upon some weak point, force it, and sever the American camp.

In fact, when we consider the scanty, ill-conditioned, and irregular force which had thus stretched itself out to beleaguer a town and harbour defended by ships and floating batteries, and garrisoned by eleven thousand strongly-posted veterans, we are at a loss whether to attribute its hazardous position to ignorance, or to that daring self-confidence which at times, in our military history, has snatched success in defiance of scientific rule. It was revenge for the slaughter at Lexington which, we are told, first prompted the investment of Boston. "The universal voice," says a contemporary, "is, starve them out. Drive them from the town, and let His Majesty's ships be their only place of refuge."

In riding throughout the camp, Washington observed that nine thousand of the troops belonged to Massachusetts; the rest were from other provinces. They were encamped in separate bodies, each with its own regulations, and officers of its own appointment. Some had tents, others were in barracks, and others sheltered themselves as best they might. Many were sadly in want of clothing, and all, said Washington, were strongly imbued with the spirit of insubordination, which they mistook for independence.

A chaplain of one of the regiments[1] has left on record a graphic sketch of this primitive army of the Revolution. "It is very diverting," writes he, "to walk among the camps. They are as different in their forms, as the owners are in their dress; and every tent is a portraiture of the temper and taste of the persons who encamp in it. Some are made of boards, and some are made of sail-cloth; some are partly of one, and partly of the other. Again, others are made of stone and turf, brick and brush. Some are thrown up in a hurry, others curiously wrought with wreaths and withes."

One of the encampments, however, was in striking contrast with the rest, and might vie with those of the British for order and exactness. Here were tents and marquees

[1] The Rev. William Emerson.

pitched in the English style; soldiers well drilled and well equipped; everything had an air of discipline and subordination. It was a body of Rhode Island troops, which had been raised, drilled, and brought to the camp by Brigadier-general Greene, of that province, whose subsequent renown entitles him to an introduction to the reader.

Nathaniel Greene was born in Rhode Island, on the 26th of May, 1742. His father was a miller, an anchor-smith, and a Quaker preacher. The waters of the Potowhammet turned the wheels of the mill, and raised the ponderous sledge-hammer of the forge. Greene in his boyhood followed the plough, and occasionally worked at the forge of his father. His education was of an ordinary kind; but having an early thirst for knowledge, he applied himself sedulously to various studies, while subsisting by the labour of his hands. Nature had endowed him with quick parts and a sound judgment, and his assiduity was crowned with success. He became fluent and instructive in conversation, and his letters, still extant, show that he held an able pen.

In the late turn of public affairs, he had caught the belligerent spirit prevalent throughout the country. Plutarch and Cæsar's Commentaries became his delight. He applied himself to military studies, for which he was prepared by some knowledge of mathematics. His ambition was to organize and discipline a corps of militia to which he belonged. For this purpose, during a visit to Boston, he had taken note of everything about the discipline of the British troops. In the month of May, he had been elected commander of the Rhode Island contingent of the army of observation, and in June had conducted to the lines before Boston, three regiments, whose encampment we have just described, and who were pronounced the best disciplined and appointed troops in the army.

Greene made a soldier-like address to Washington, welcoming him to the camp. His appearance and manner were calculated to make a favourable impression. He was about thirty-nine years of age, nearly six feet high, well built and vigorous, with an open, animated, intelligent countenance, and a frank, manly demeanour. He may be said to have stepped at once into the confidence of the commander-in-chief, which he never forfeited, but became

one of his most attached, faithful, and efficient coadjutors throughout the war.

Having taken his survey of the army, Washington wrote to the President of Congress, representing its various deficiencies, and, among other things, urging the appointment of a commissary-general, a quartermaster-general, a commissary of musters, and a commissary of artillery. Above all things, he requested a supply of money as soon as possible. "I find myself already much embarrassed for want of a military chest."

In one of his recommendations we have an instance of frontier expediency, learnt in his early campaigns. Speaking of the ragged condition of the army, and the difficulty of procuring the requisite kind of clothing, he advises that a number of hunting-shirts, not less than ten thousand, should be provided, as being the cheapest and quickest mode of supplying this necessity. "I know nothing in a speculative view more trivial," observes he, "yet which, if put in practice, would have a happier tendency to unite the men, and abolish those provincial distinctions that lead to jealousy and dissatisfaction."

Among the troops most destitute were those belonging to Massachusetts, which formed the larger part of the army. Washington made a noble apology for them. "This unhappy and devoted province," said he, "has been so long in a state of anarchy, and the yoke has been laid so heavily on it, that great allowances are to be made for troops raised under such circumstances. The deficiency of numbers, discipline, and stores, can only lead to this conclusion, *that their spirit has exceeded their strength.*"

This apology was the more generous, coming from a Southerner; for there was a disposition among the Southern officers to regard the Eastern troops disparagingly. But Washington already felt as commander-in-chief, who looked with an equal eye on all; or rather as a true patriot, who was above all sectional prejudices.

One of the most efficient co-operators of Washington at this time, and throughout the war, was Jonathan Trumbull, the Governor of Connecticut. He was a well-educated man, experienced in public business, who had sat for many years in the legislative councils of his native province.

Misfortune had cast him down from affluence at an advanced period of life, but had not subdued his native energy. He had been one of the leading spirits of the Revolution, and the only colonial governor who, at its commencement, proved true to the popular cause. He was now sixty-five years of age, active, zealous, devout, a patriot of the primitive New England stamp, whose religion sanctified his patriotism. A letter addressed by him to Washington, just after the latter had entered upon the command, is worthy of the purest days of the Covenanters. "Congress," writes he, "have, with one united voice appointed you to the high station you possess. The Supreme Director of all events hath caused a wonderful union of hearts and counsels to subsist among us.

"Now, therefore, be strong, and very courageous. May the God of the armies of Israel shower down the blessings of his Divine providence on you; give you wisdom and fortitude, cover your head in the day of battle and danger, add success, convince our enemies of their mistaken measures, and that all their attempts to deprive these colonies of their inestimable constitutional rights and liberties, are injurious and vain."

NOTE.

We are obliged to Professor Felton, of Cambridge, for correcting an error in our first volume in regard to Washington's head-quarters, and for some particulars concerning a house, associated with the history and literature of our country.

The house assigned to Washington for head-quarters, was that of the president of the Provincial Congress, not of the University. It had been one of those Tory mansions noticed by the Baroness Reidesel, in her mention of Cambridge. "Seven families, who were connected by relationship, or lived in great intimacy, had here farms, gardens, and splendid mansions, and not far off, orchards; and the buildings were at a quarter of a mile distant from each other. The owners had been in the habit of assembling every afternoon in one or other of these houses, and of diverting themselves with music or dancing; and lived in affluence, in good humour, and without care, until this unfortunate war dispersed them, and transformed all these houses into solitary abodes."

The house in question was confiscated by Government. It stood on the Watertown road, about half a mile west of the college, and has long been known as the Cragie House, from the name of Andrew Cragie, a wealthy gentleman, who purchased it after the war, and revived its former hospitality. He is said to have acquired great influence among

the leading members of the "great and general court," by dint of jovial dinners. He died long since, but his widow survived until within fifteen years. She was a woman of much talent and singularity. She refused to have the canker-worms destroyed, when they were making sad ravages among the beautiful trees on the lawn before the house. "We are all worms," said she, "and they have as good a right here as I have." The consequence was that more than half of the trees perished.

The Cragie House is associated with American literature through some of its subsequent occupants. Mr. Edward Everett resided in it the first year or two after his marriage. Later, Mr. Jared Sparks, during part of the time that he was preparing his collection of Washington's writings; editing a volume or two of his letters in the very room from which they were written. Next came Mr. Worcester, author of the pugnacious dictionary, and of many excellent books, and lastly Longfellow, the poet, who, having married the heroine of Hyperion, purchased the house of the heirs of Mr. Cragie, and refitted it.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Questions of Military Rank—Popularity of Putnam—Arrangements at Head-quarters—Colonel Mifflin and John Trumbull, Aides-de-camp—Joseph Reed, Washington's Secretary and confidential Friend—Gates as Adjutant-general—Hazardous situation of the Army—Strengthening of the Defences—Efficiency of Putnam—Rapid Changes—New Distribution of the Forces—Rigid Discipline—Lee and his Cane—His idea as to strong Battalions—Arrival of Rifle Companies—Daniel Morgan and his Sharp-shooters—Washington declines to detach Troops to distant points for their protection—His reasons for so doing.

The justice and impartiality of Washington were called into exercise as soon as he entered upon his command, in allaying discontents among his general officers, caused by the recent appointments and promotions made by the Continental Congress. General Spencer was so offended that Putnam should be promoted over his head, that he left the army, without visiting the commander-in-chief; but was subsequently induced to return. General Thomas felt aggrieved by being outranked by the veteran Pomeroy; the latter, however, declining to serve, he found himself senior brigadier, and was appeased.

The sterling merits of Putnam soon made every one acquiesce in his promotion. There was a generosity and buoyancy about the brave old man that made him a fa-

vourite throughout the army; especially with the younger officers, who spoke of him familiarly and fondly as "Old Put;" a soubriquet by which he is called even in one of the private letters of the commander-in-chief.

The Congress of Massachusetts manifested considerate liberality with respect to head-quarters. According to their minutes, a committee was charged to procure a steward, a housekeeper, and two or three women cooks; Washington, no doubt, having brought with him none but the black servants who had accompanied him to Philadelphia, and who were but little fitted for New England housekeeping. His wishes were to be consulted in regard to the supply of his table. This, his station, as commander-in-chief, required should be kept up in ample and hospitable style. Every day a number of his officers dined with him. As he was in the neighbourhood of the seat of the Provincial Government, he would occasionally have members of Congress and other functionaries at his board. Though social, however, he was not convivial in his habits. He received his guests with courtesy; but his mind and time were too much occupied by grave and anxious concerns, to permit him the genial indulgence of the table. His own diet was extremely simple. Sometimes nothing but baked apples or berries, with cream and milk. He would retire early from the board, leaving an aide-de-camp or one of his officers to take his place. Colonel Mifflin was the first person who officiated as aide-de-camp. He was a Philadelphia gentleman of high respectability, who had accompanied him from that city, and received his appointment shortly after their arrival at Cambridge. The second aide-de-camp was John Trumbull,[1] son of the Governor of Connecticut. He had accompanied General Spencer to the camp, and had caught the favourable notice of Washington by some drawings which he had made of the enemy's works. "I now suddenly found myself," writes Trumbull, "in the family of one of the most distinguished and dignified men of the age; surrounded at his table by the principal officers of the army, and in constant intercourse with them—it was further my duty to receive company, and do

[1] In after years distinguished as a historical painter.

the honours of the house to many of the first people of the country of both sexes." Trumbull was young, and unaccustomed to society, and soon found himself, he says, unequal to the elegant duties of his situation; he gladly exchanged it, therefore, for that of major of brigade.

The member of Washington's family most deserving of mention at present, was his secretary, Mr. Joseph Reed. With this gentleman he had formed an intimacy in the course of his visits to Philadelphia, to attend the sessions of the Continental Congress. Mr. Reed was an accomplished man, had studied law in America and at the Temple in London, and had gained a high reputation at the Philadelphia bar. In the dawning of the Revolution he had embraced the popular cause, and carried on a correspondence with the Earl of Dartmouth, endeavouring to enlighten that minister on the subject of colonial affairs. He had since been highly instrumental in rousing the Philadelphians to co-operate with the patriots of Boston. A sympathy of views and feelings had attached him to Washington, and induced him to accompany him to the camp. He had no definite purpose when he left home, and his friends in Philadelphia were surprised, on receiving a letter from him written from Cambridge, to find that he had accepted the post of secretary to the commander-in-chief.

They expostulated with him by letter. That a man in the thirty-fifth year of his age, with a lucrative profession, a young wife and growing family, and a happy home, should suddenly abandon all to join the hazardous fortunes of a revolutionary camp, appeared to them the height of infatuation. They remonstrated on the peril of the step. "I have no inclination," replied Reed, "to be hanged for half treason. When a subject draws his sword against his prince, he must cut his way through, if he means to sit down in safety. I have taken too active a part in what may be called the civil part of opposition, to renounce, without disgrace, the public cause when it seems to lead to danger; and have a most sovereign contempt for the man who can plan measures he has not the spirit to execute."

Washington has occasionally been represented as cold and reserved; yet his intercourse with Mr. Reed is a proof

to the contrary. His friendship towards him was frank and cordial, and the confidence he reposed in him full and implicit. Reed, in fact, became, in a little time, the intimate companion of his thoughts, his bosom counsellor. He felt the need of such a friend in the present exigency, placed as he was, in a new and untried situation, and having to act with persons hitherto unknown to him.

In military matters, it is true, he had a shrewd counsellor in General Lee; but Lee was a wayward character; a cosmopolite, without attachment to country, somewhat splenetic, and prone to follow the bent of his whims and humours, which often clashed with propriety and sound policy. Reed, on the contrary, though less informed on military matters, had a strong common sense, unclouded by passion or prejudice, and a pure patriotism, which regarded everything as it bore upon the welfare of his country.

Washington's confidence in Lee had always to be measured and guarded in matters of civil policy.

The arrival of Gates in camp was heartily welcomed by the commander-in-chief, who had received a letter from that officer, gratefully acknowledging his friendly influence in procuring him the appointment of adjutant-general. Washington may have promised himself much cordial cooperation from him, recollecting the warm friendship professed by him when he visited at Mount Vernon, and they talked together over their early companionship in arms; but of that kind of friendship there was no further manifestation. Gates was certainly of great service, from his practical knowledge and military experience, at this juncture, when the whole army had in a manner to be organized; but from the familiar intimacy of Washington he gradually estranged himself. A contemporary has accounted for this, by alleging that he was secretly chagrined at not having received the appointment of major-general, to which he considered himself well fitted by his military knowledge and experience, and which he thought Washington might have obtained for him had he used his influence with Congress. We shall have to advert to this estrangement of Gates on subsequent occasions.

The hazardous position of the army, from the great ex

tent and weakness of its lines, was what most pressed on the immediate attention of Washington; and he summoned a council of war, to take the matter into consideration. In this it was urged, that to abandon the line of works, after the great labour and expense of their construction, would be dispiriting to the troops and encouraging to the enemy, while it would expose a wide extent of the surrounding country to maraud and ravage. Beside, no safer position presented itself, on which to fall back. This being generally admitted, it was determined to hold on to the works and defend them as long as possible; and, in the meantime, to augment the army to at least twenty thousand men.

Washington now hastened to improve the defences of the camp, strengthen the weak parts of the line, and throw up additional works round the main forts. No one seconded him more effectually in this matter than General Putnam. No works were thrown up with equal rapidity to those under his superintendence. "You seem, general," said Washington, "to have the faculty of infusing your own spirit into all the workmen you employ;"—and it was the fact.

The observing chaplain, already cited, gazed with wonder at the rapid effects soon produced by the labours of an army. "It is surprising," writes he, "how much work has been done. The lines are extended almost from Cambridge to Mystic River; very soon it will be morally impossible for the enemy to get between the works, except in one place, which is supposed to be left purposely unfortified, to entice the enemy out of their fortresses. Who would have thought, twelve months past, that all Cambridge and Charlestown would be covered over with American camps, and cut up into forts and intrenchments, and all the lands, fields, orchards, laid common,—horses and cattle feeding on the choicest mowing land, whole fields of corn eaten down to the ground, and large parks of well-regulated forest trees cut down for fire-wood and other public uses!"

Beside the main dispositions above mentioned, about seven hundred men were distributed in the small towns and villages along the coast to prevent depredations by

water; and horses were kept ready saddled at various points of the widely-extended lines, to convey to head-quarters intelligence of any special movement of the enemy.

The army was distributed by Washington into three grand divisions. One, forming the right wing, was stationed on the heights of Roxbury. It was commanded by Major-general Ward, who had under him Brigadier-generals Spencer and Thomas. Another, forming the left wing, under Major-general Lee, having with him Brigadier-generals Sullivan and Greene, was stationed on Winter and Prospect Hills; while the centre, under Major-general Putnam and Brigadier-general Heath, was stationed at Cambridge. With Putnam was encamped his favourite officer Knowlton, who had been promoted by Congress to the rank of major for his gallantry at Bunker's Hill.

At Washington's recommendation, Joseph Trumbull, the eldest son of the governor, received on the 24th of July the appointment of commissary-general of the continental army. He had already officiated with talent in that capacity in the Connecticut militia. "There is a great overturning in the camp as to order and regularity," writes the military chaplain; "new lords, new laws. The generals Washington and Lee are upon the lines every day. New orders from his excellency are read to the respective regiments every morning after prayers. The strictest government is taking place, and great distinction is made between officers and soldiers. Every one is made to know his place and keep it, or be tied up and receive thirty or forty lashes according to his crime. Thousands are at work every day from four till eleven o'clock in the morning."

Lee was supposed to have been at the bottom of this rigid discipline; the result of his experience in European campaigning. His notions of military authority were acquired in the armies of the North. Quite a sensation was, on one occasion, produced in camp by his threatening to cane an officer for unsoldierly conduct. His laxity in other matters occasioned almost equal scandal. He scoffed, we are told, "with his usual profaneness," at a resolution of Congress appointing a day of fasting and prayer, to

obtain the favour of heaven upon their cause. "Heaven," he observed, "was ever found favourable to strong battalions."[1]

Washington differed from him in this respect. By his orders the resolution of Congress was scrupulously enforced. All labour, excepting that absolutely necessary, was suspended on the appointed day, and officers and soldiers were required to attend divine service, armed and equipped and ready for immediate action.

Nothing excited more gaze and wonder among the rustic visitors to the camp, than the arrival of several rifle companies, fourteen hundred men in all, from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia; such stalwart fellows as Washington had known in his early campaigns. Stark hunters and bush-fighters; many of them upwards of six feet high, and of vigorous frame; dressed in fringed frocks, or rifle shirts, and round hats. Their displays of sharp-shooting were soon among the marvels of the camp. We are told that while advancing at quick step, they could hit a mark of seven inches diameter, at the distance of two hundred and fifty yards.[2]

One of these companies was commanded by Captain Daniel Morgan, a native of New Jersey, whose first experience in war had been to accompany Braddock's army as a waggoner. He had since carried arms on the frontier and obtained a command. He and his riflemen in coming to the camp had marched six hundred miles in three weeks. They will be found of signal efficiency in the sharpest conflicts of the revolutionary war.

While all his forces were required for the investment of Boston, Washington was importuned by the Legislature of Massachusetts and the Governor of Connecticut, to detach troops for the protection of different points of the sea-coast, where depredations by armed vessels were apprehended. The case of New London was specified by Governor Trumbull, where Captain Wallace of the Rose frigate, with two other ships of war, had entered the harbour, landed men, spiked the cannon, and gone off threatening future visits.

[1] Graydon's Memoirs, p. 138.
[2] Thacher's Military Journal, p. 37.

Washington referred to his instructions, and consulted with his general officers and such members of the Continental Congress as happened to be in camp, before he replied to these requests; he then respectfully declined compliance.

In his reply to the General Assembly of Massachusetts, he stated frankly and explicitly the policy and system on which the war was to be conducted, and according to which he was to act as commander-in-chief. "It has been debated in Congress and settled," writes he, "that the militia, or other internal strength of each province, is to be applied for defence against those small and particular depredations, which were to be expected, and to which they were supposed to be competent. This will appear the more proper, when it is considered that every town, and indeed every part of our sea-coast, which is exposed to these depredations, would have an equal claim upon this army.

"It is the misfortune of our situation which exposes us to these ravages, and against which, in my judgment, no such temporary relief could possibly secure us. The great advantage the enemy have of transporting troops, by being masters of the sea, will enable them to harass us by diversions of this kind; and should we be tempted to pursue them, upon every alarm, the army must either be so weakened as to expose it to destruction, or a great part of the coast be still left unprotected. Nor, indeed, does it appear to me that such a pursuit would be attended with the least effect. The first notice of such an excursion would be its actual execution, and long before any troops could reach the scene of action, the enemy would have an opportunity to accomplish their purpose and retire. It would give me great pleasure to have it in my power to extend protection and safety to every individual; but the wisdom of the General Court will anticipate me on the necessity of conducting our operations on a general and impartial scale, so as to exclude any just cause of complaint and jealousy."

His reply to the governor of Connecticut was to the same effect. "I am by no means insensible to the situation of the people on the coast. I wish I could extend protection to all, but the numerous detachments necessary to

remedy the evil would amount to a dissolution of the army, or make the most important operations of the campaign depend upon the piratical expeditions of two or three men-of-war and transports."

His refusal to grant the required detachments gave much dissatisfaction in some quarters, until sanctioned and enforced by the Continental Congress. All at length saw and acquiesced in the justice and wisdom of his decision. It was in fact a vital question, involving the whole character and fortune of the war; and it was acknowledged that he met it with a forecast and determination befitting a commander-in-chief.

CHAPTER XLV.

Washington's object in distressing Boston—Scarcity and Sickness in the Town—A startling Discovery—Scarcity of Powder in the Camp—Its perilous situation—Economy of Ammunition—Correspondence between Lee and Burgoyne—Correspondence between Washington and Gage—The dignity of the Patriot Army asserted.

The great object of Washington, at present, was to force the enemy to come out of Boston and try a decisive action. His lines had for some time cut off all communication of the town with the country, and he had caused the live stock within a considerable distance of the place to be driven back from the coast, out of reach of the men-of-war's boats. Fresh provisions and vegetables were consequently growing more and more scarce and extravagantly dear, and sickness began to prevail. "I have done and shall do everything in my power to distress them," writes he to his brother John Augustine. "The transports have all arrived, and their whole reinforcement is landed, so that I see no reason why they should not, if they ever attempt it, come boldly out and put the matter to issue at once."

"We are in the strangest state in the world," writes a lady from Boston, "surrounded on all sides. The whole country is in arms and intrenched. We are deprived of fresh provisions, subject to continual alarms and cannonadings, the Provincials being very audacious and advancing

to our lines, since the arrival of Generals Washington and Lee to command them."

At this critical juncture, when Washington was pressing the siege, and endeavouring to provoke a general action, a startling fact came to light; the whole amount of powder in the camp would not furnish more than nine cartridges to a man![1]

A gross error had been made by the committee of supplies when Washington, on taking command, had required a return of the ammunition. They had returned the whole amount of powder collected by the province, upwards of three hundred barrels; without stating what had been expended. The blunder was detected on an order being issued for a new supply of cartridges. It was found there were but thirty-two barrels of powder in store.

This was an astounding discovery. Washington instantly despatched letters and expresses to Rhode Island, the Jerseys, Ticonderoga, and elsewhere, urging immediate supplies of powder and lead; no quantity, however small, to be considered beneath notice. In a letter to Governor Cooke, of Rhode Island, he suggested that an armed vessel of that province might be sent to seize upon a magazine of gunpowder, said to be in a remote part of the Island of Bermuda. "I am very sensible," writes he, "that at first view the project may appear hazardous, and its success must depend on the concurrence of many circumstances; but we are in a situation which requires us to run all risks. * * * Enterprises which appear chimerical often prove successful from that very circumstance. Common sense and prudence will suggest vigilance and care, where the danger is plain and obvious; but where little danger is apprehended, the more the enemy will be unprepared, and, consequently, there is the fairest prospect of success."

Day after day elapsed without the arrival of any supplies, for in these irregular times the munitions of war were not readily procured. It seemed hardly possible that the matter could be kept concealed from the enemy. Their works on Bunker's Hill commanded a full view of those of the Americans on Winter and Prospect Hills. Each camp

[1] Letter to the President of Congress, Aug. 4.

could see what was passing in the other. The sentries were almost near enough to converse. There was furtive intercourse occasionally between the men. In this critical state, the American camp remained for a fortnight; the anxious commander incessantly apprehending an attack. At length a partial supply from the Jerseys put an end to this imminent risk. Washington's secretary, Reed, who had been the confidant of his troubles and anxieties, gives a vivid expression of his feelings on the arrival of this relief. "I can hardly look back, without shuddering, at our situation before this increase of our stock. *Stock* did I say? It was next to nothing. Almost the whole powder of the army was in the cartridge-boxes."[1]

It is thought that, considering the clandestine intercourse carried on between the two camps, intelligence of this deficiency of ammunition on the part of the besiegers must have been conveyed to the British commander; but that the bold face with which the Americans continued to maintain their position, made him discredit it.

Notwithstanding the supply from the Jerseys, there was not more powder in camp than would serve the artillery for one day of general action. None, therefore, was allowed to be wasted; the troops were even obliged to bear in silence an occasional cannonading. "Our poverty in ammunition," writes Washington, "prevents our making a suitable return."

One of the painful circumstances attending the outbreak of a revolutionary war is, that gallant men, who have held allegiance to the same government, and fought side by side under the same flag, suddenly find themselves in deadly conflict with each other. Such was the case at present in the hostile camps. General Lee, it will be recollected, had once served under General Burgoyne, in Portugal, and had won his brightest laurels when detached by that commander to surprise the Spanish camp, near the Moorish castle of Villa Velha. A soldier's friendship had ever since existed between them, and when Lee had heard at Philadelphia, before he had engaged in the American service, that his old comrade and commander

[1] Reed to Thomas Bradford. Life and Correspondence, vol. i. p. 118.

was arrived at Boston, he wrote a letter to him giving his own views on the points in dispute between the colonies and the mother country, and inveighing with his usual vehemence and sarcastic point, against the conduct of the court and ministry. Before sending the letter, he submitted it to the Boston delegates and other members of Congress, and received their sanction.

Since his arrival in camp he had received a reply from Burgoyne, couched in moderate and courteous language, and proposing an interview at a designated house on Boston Neck, within the British sentries; mutual pledges to be given for each other's safety.

Lee submitted this letter to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, and requested their commands with respect to the proposed interview. They expressed, in reply, the highest confidence in his wisdom, discretion, and integrity, but questioned whether the interview might not be regarded by the public with distrust; "a people contending for their liberties being naturally disposed to jealousy." They suggested, therefore, as a means of preventing popular misconception, that Lee, on seeking the interview, should be accompanied by Mr. Elbridge Gerry; or that the advice of a council of war should be taken in a matter of such apparent delicacy.

Lee became aware of the surmises that might be awakened by the proposed interview, and wrote a friendly note to Burgoyne declining it,

A correspondence of a more important character took place between Washington and General Gage. It was one intended to put the hostile services on a proper footing. A strong disposition had been manifested among the British officers to regard those engaged in the patriot cause as malefactors, outlawed from the courtesies of chivalric warfare. Washington was determined to have a full understanding on this point. He was peculiarly sensitive with regard to Gage. They had been companions in arms in their early days; but Gage might now affect to look down upon him as the chief of a rebel army. Washington took an early opportunity to let him know. that he claimed to be the commander of a legitimate force, engaged in a legitimate cause, and that both

himself and his army were to be treated on a footing of perfect equality. The correspondence arose from the treatment of several American officers.

"I understand," writes Washington to Gage, "that the officers engaged in the cause of liberty and their country, who by the fortune of war have fallen into your hands, have been thrown indiscriminately into a common gaol, appropriated to felons; that no consideration has been had for those of the most respectable rank, when languishing with wounds and sickness, and that some have been amputated in this unworthy situation. Let your opinion, sir, of the principles which actuate them, be what it may, they suppose that they act from the noblest of all principles, love of freedom and their country. But political principles, I conceive, are foreign to this point. The obligations arising from the rights of humanity and claims of rank are universally binding and extensive, except in case of retaliation. These, I should have hoped, would have dictated a more tender treatment of those individuals whom chance or war had put in your power. Nor can I forbear suggesting its fatal tendency to widen that unhappy breach which you, and those ministers under whom you act, have repeatedly declared your wish to see for ever closed. My duty now makes it necessary to apprise you that, for the future, I shall regulate all my conduct towards those gentlemen who are, or may be, in our possession, exactly by the rule you shall observe towards those of ours, now in your custody.

"If severity and hardships mark the line of your conduct, painful as it may be to me, your prisoners will feel its effects. But if kindness and humanity are shown to us, I shall with pleasure consider those in our hands only as unfortunate, and they shall receive from me that treatment to which the unfortunate are ever entitled."

The following are the essential parts of a letter from General Gage in reply:—

"Sir,—To the glory of civilised nations, humanity and war have been compatible, and humanity to the subdued has become almost a general system. Britons, ever pre-eminent in mercy, have outgone common examples, and overlooked the criminal in the captive. Upon these prin-

ciples your prisoners, whose lives by the law of the land are destined to the cord, have hitherto been treated with care and kindness, and more comfortably lodged than the King's troops in the hospitals; indiscriminately, it is true, for I acknowledge no rank that is not derived from the King.

"My intelligence from your army would justify severe recriminations. I understand there are of the King's faithful subjects, taken some time since by the rebels, labouring, like negro slaves to gain their daily subsistence, or reduced to the wretched alternative to perish by famine or take arms against their King and country. Those who have made the treatment of the prisoners in my hands, or of your other friends in Boston, a pretence for such measures, found barbarity upon falsehood.

"I would willingly hope, sir, that the sentiments of liberality which I have always believed you to possess, will be exerted to correct these misdoings. Be temperate in political disquisition; give free operation to truth, and punish those who deceive and misrepresent; and not only the effects, but the cause, of this unhappy conflict, will be removed. Should those, under whose usurped authority you act, control such a disposition, and dare to call severity retaliation; to God, who knows all hearts, be the appeal of the dreadful consequences," &c.

There were expressions in the foregoing letter well calculated to rouse indignant feelings in the most temperate bosom. Had Washington been as readily moved to transports of passion as some are pleased to represent him, the *rebel* and the *cord* might readily have stung him to fury; but with him, anger was checked in its impulses by higher energies, and reined in to give a grander effect to the dictates of his judgment. The following was his noble and dignified reply to General Gage:—

"I addressed you, sir, on the 11th instant, in terms which gave the fairest scope for that humanity and politeness which were supposed to form a part of your character. I remonstrated with you on the unworthy treatment shown to the officers and citizens of America, whom the fortune of war, chance, or a mistaken confidence, had thrown into your hands. Whether British or American mercy, for-

titude, and patience, are most pre-eminent; whether our virtuous citizens, whom the hand of tyranny has forced into arms to defend their wives, their children, and their property, or the merciless instruments of lawless domination, avarice, and revenge, best deserve the appellation of rebels, and the punishment of that cord, which your affected clemency has forborne to inflict; whether the authority under which I act is usurped, or founded upon the genuine principles of liberty, were altogether foreign to the subject. I purposely avoided all political disquisition; nor shall I now avail myself of those advantages which the sacred cause of my country, of liberty, and of human nature give me over you; much less shall I stoop to retort and invective; but the intelligence you say you have received from our army requires a reply. I have taken time, sir, to make a strict inquiry, and find it has not the least foundation in truth. Not only your officers and soldiers have been treated with the tenderness due to fellow-citizens and brethren, but even those execrable parricides, whose counsels and aid have deluged their country with blood, have been protected from the fury of a justly-enraged people. Far from compelling or permitting their assistance, I am embarrassed with the numbers who crowd to our camp, animated with the purest principles of virtue and love to their country.

* * * * * *

"You affect, sir, to despise all rank not derived from the same source with your own. I cannot conceive one more honourable, than that which flows from the uncorrupted choice of a brave and free people, the purest source and original fountain of all power. Far from making it a plea for cruelty, a mind of true magnanimity and enlarged ideas would comprehend and respect it.

"What may have been the ministerial views which have precipitated the present crisis, Lexington, Concord, and Charlestown, can best declare. May that God, to whom you, too, appeal, judge between America and you! Under his providence, those who influence the councils of America, and all the other inhabitants of the united colonies, at the hazard of their lives, are determined to hand down to posterity those just and invaluable privileges which they received from their ancestors.

"I shall now, sir, close my correspondence with you, perhaps for ever. If your officers, our prisoners, receive a treatment from me different from that which I wished to show them, they and you will remember the occasion of it."

We have given these letters of Washington almost entire, for they contain his manifesto as commander-in-chief of the armies of the Revolution; setting forth the opinions and motives by which he was governed, and the principles on which hostilities on his part would be conducted. It was planting with the pen that standard which was to be maintained by the sword.

In conformity with the threat conveyed in the latter part of his letter, Washington issued orders that British officers at Watertown and Cape Ann, who were at large on parole, should be confined in Northampton gaol; explaining to them that this conduct, which might appear to them harsh and cruel, was contrary to his disposition, but according to the rule of treatment observed by General Gage toward the American prisoners in his hands, making no distinction of rank. Circumstances, of which we have no explanation, induced subsequently a revocation of this order; the officers were permitted to remain as before, at large upon parole, experiencing every indulgence and civility consistent with their security.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Dangers in the Interior—Machinations of the Johnson Family—Rivalry of Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold—Government perplexities about the Ticonderoga Capture—Measures to secure the Prize—Allen and Arnold ambitious of further laurels—Projects for the Invasion of Canada—Ethan Allen and Seth Warner honoured by Congress—Arnold displaced by a Committee of Inquiry—His indignation—News from Canada—The Revolution to be extended into that Province—Enlistment of Green Mountain Boys—Schuyler at Ticonderoga—State of Affairs there—Election for Officers of the Green Mountain Boys—Ethan Allen dismounted—Joins the Army as a Volunteer—Preparations for the Invasion of Canada—General Montgomery—Indian Chiefs at Cambridge—Council Fire—Plan for an Expedition against Quebec—Departure of Troops from Ticonderoga—Arrival at Isle Aux Noix.

We must interrupt our narrative of the siege of Boston to give an account of events in other quarters, requiring the superintending care of Washington as commander-in-chief.

Letters from General Schuyler, received in the course of July, had awakened apprehensions of danger from the interior. The Johnsons were said to be stirring up the Indians in the western parts of New York to hostility, and preparing to join the British forces in Canada; so that, while the patriots were battling for their rights along the seaboard, they were menaced by a powerful combination in rear. To place this matter in a proper light, we will give a brief statement of occurrences in the upper part of New York, and on the frontiers of Canada, since the exploits of Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold at Ticonderoga and on Lake Champlain.

Great rivalry, as has already been noted, had arisen between these doughty leaders. Both had sent off expresses to the provincial authorities, giving an account of their recent triumphs. Allen claimed command at Ticonderoga, on the authority of the committee from the Connecticut Assembly, which had originated the enterprise. Arnold claimed it on the strength of his instructions from the Massachusetts committee of safety. He bore a commission, too, given him by that committee; whereas Allen had no other commission than that given him before the war by the committees in the Hampshire Grants to command their Green Mountain Boys against the encroachments of New York.

"Colonel Allen," said Arnold, "is a proper man to head his own wild people, but entirely unacquainted with military service; and as I am the only person who has been legally authorized to take possession of this place, I am determined to insist on my right; * * * and shall keep it [the fort] at every hazard, until I have further orders."[1]

The public bodies themselves seemed perplexed what to do with the prize, so bravely seized upon by these bold men. Allen had written to the Albany committee for men and provisions, to enable him to maintain his conquest. The committee feared this daring enterprise might involve the northern part of the province in the horrors of war and desolation, and asked advice of the New York committee. The New York committee did not think themselves author-

[1] Arnold to Mass. Comm. of Safety. Am. Arch. ii. 557.

ized to give an opinion upon a matter of such importance, and referred it to the Continental Congress.

The Massachusetts committee of safety, to whom Arnold had written, referred the affair to the Massachusetts Provincial Congress. That body, as the enterprise had begun in Connecticut, wrote to its General Assembly to take the whole matter under their care and direction, until the advice of the Continental Congress could be had.

The Continental Congress at length legitimated the exploit, and, as it were, accepted the captured fortress. As it was situated within New York, the custody of it was committed to that province, aided, if necessary, by the New England colonies, on whom it was authorized to call for military assistance.

The Provincial Congress of New York forthwith invited the "Governor and Company of the English Colony of Connecticut" to place part of their forces in these captured posts, until relieved by New York troops; and Trumbull, the governor of Connecticut, soon gave notice that one thousand men under Colonel Hinman were on the point of marching for the reinforcement of Ticonderoga and Crown Point.

It had been the idea of the Continental Congress to have those posts dismantled, and the cannon and stores removed to the south end of Lake George, where a strong post was to be established. But both Allen and Arnold exclaimed against such a measure, vaunting, and with reason, the importance of those forts.

Both Allen and Arnold were ambitious of further laurels. Both were anxious to lead an expedition into Canada; and Ticonderoga and Crown Point would open the way to it. "The key is ours," writes Allen to the New York Congress. "If the colonies would suddenly push an army of two or three thousand men into Canada, they might make an easy conquest of all that would oppose them in the extensive province of Quebec, except a reinforcement from England should prevent it. Such a division would weaken Gage and insure us Canada. I wish to God America would, at this critical juncture, exert herself agreeably to the indignity offered her by a tyrannical ministry. She might rise on eagles' wings, and mount up to glory, freedom, and

immortal honour, if she did but know and exert her strength. Fame is now hovering over her head. A vast continent must now sink to slavery, poverty, horror, and bondage, or rise to unconquerable freedom, immense wealth, inexpressible felicity, and immortal fame.

"I will lay my life on it, that with fifteen hundred men, and a proper train of artillery, I will take Montreal. Provided I could be thus furnished, and if an army could command the field, it would be no insuperable difficulty to take Quebec."

A letter to the same purport, and with the same rhetorical flourish, on which he appeared to value himself, was written by Allen to Trumbull, the governor of Connecticut. Arnold urged the same project, but in less magniloquent language, upon the attention of the Continental Congress. His letter was dated from Crown Point, where he had a little squadron, composed of the sloop captured at St. Johns, a schooner, and a flotilla of bateaux. All these he had equipped, armed, manned, and officered, and his crews were devoted to him. In his letter to the Continental Congress he gave information concerning Canada, collected through spies and agents. Carleton, he said, had not six hundred effective men under him. The Canadians and Indians were disaffected to the British Government; and Montreal was ready to throw open its gates to a patriot force. Two thousand men, he was certain, would be sufficient to get possession of the province.

"I beg leave to add," says he, "that if no person appears who will undertake to carry the plan into execution, I will undertake, and, with the smiles of Heaven, answer for the success, provided I am supplied with men, &c., to carry it into execution without loss of time."

In a postscript of his letter he specifies the forces requisite for his suggested invasion. "In order to give satisfaction to the different colonies, I propose that Colonel Hinman's regiment, now on their march from Connecticut to Ticonderoga, should form part of the army, say one thousand men; five hundred men to be sent from New York, five hundred of General Arnold's regiment, including the seamen and marines on board the vessels (no *Green Mountain* Boys)."

Within a few days after the date of this letter, Colonel Hinman with the Connecticut troops arrived. The greater part of the Green Mountain Boys now returned home, their term of enlistment having expired. Ethan Allen and his brother in arms, Seth Warner, repaired to Congress to get pay for their men, and authority to raise a new regiment. They were received with distinguished honour by that body. The same pay was awarded to the men who had served under them as that allowed to the continental troops; and it was recommended to the New York Convention that, should it meet the approbation of General Schuyler, a fresh corps of Green Mountain Boys about to be raised, should be employed in the army under such officers as they (the Green Mountain Boys) should choose.

To the New York Convention Allen and Warner now repaired. There was a difficulty about admitting them to the Hall of Assembly, for their attainder of outlawry had not been repealed. Patriotism, however, pleaded in their behalf. They obtained an audience. A regiment of Green Mountain Boys, five hundred strong, was decreed, and General Schuyler notified the people of the New Hampshire Grants of the resolve, and requested them to raise the regiment.

Thus prosperously went the affairs of Ethan Allen and Seth Warner. As to Arnold, difficulties instantly took place between him and Colonel Hinman. Arnold refused to give up to him the command of either post, claiming on the strength of his instructions from the committee of safety of Massachusetts, a right to the command of all the posts and fortresses at the south end of Lake Champlain and Lake George. This threw everything into confusion. Colonel Hinman was himself perplexed in this conflict of various authorities; being, as it were, but a *locum tenens* for the province of New York.

Arnold was at Crown Point, acting as commander of the fort and admiral of the fleet, and having about a hundred and fifty resolute men under him, was expecting with confidence to be authorized to lead an expedition into Canada.

At this juncture arrived a committee of three members of the Congress of Massachusetts, sent by that body to inquire into the manner in which he had executed his

instructions; complaints having been made of his arrogant and undue assumption of command.

Arnold was thunderstruck at being subjected to inquiry, when he had expected an ovation. He requested a sight of the committee's instructions. The sight of them only increased his indignation. They were to acquaint themselves with the manner in which he had executed his commission; with his spirit, capacity, and conduct. Should they think proper, they might order him to return to Massachusetts, to render account of the moneys, ammunition, and stores he had received, and the debts he had contracted on behalf of the colony. While at Ticonderoga, he and his men were to be under command of the principal officer from Connecticut.

Arnold was furious. He swore he would be second in command to no one, disbanded his men, and threw up his commission. Quite a scene ensued. His men became turbulent; some refused to serve under any other leader; others clamoured for their pay, which was in arrears. Part joined Arnold on board of the vessels which were drawn out into the lake; and among other ebullitions of passion, there was a threat of sailing for St. Johns.

At length the storm was allayed by the interference of several of the officers, and the assurances of the committee that every man should be paid. A part of them enlisted under Colonel Easton, and Arnold set off for Cambridge to settle his accounts with the committee of safety.

The project of an invasion of Canada, urged by Allen and Arnold, had at first met with no favour, the Continental Congress having formally resolved to make no hostile attempts upon that province. Intelligence subsequently received induced it to change its plans. Carleton was said to be strengthening the fortifications and garrison at St. Johns, and preparing to launch vessels on the lake wherewith to regain command of it, and retake the captured posts. Powerful reinforcements were coming from England and elsewhere. Guy Johnson was holding councils with the fierce Cayugas and Senecas, and stirring up the Six Nations to hostility. On the other hand, Canada was full of religious and political dissensions. The late exploits of the Americans on Lake Champlain had produced a

favourable effect on the Canadians, who would flock to the patriot standard if unfurled among them by an imposing force. Now was the time to strike a blow to paralyze all hostility from this quarter; now, while Carleton's regular force was weak, and before the arrival of additional troops. Influenced by these considerations, Congress now determined to extend the revolution into Canada, but it was an enterprise too important to be intrusted to any but discreet hands. General Schuyler, then in New York, was accordingly ordered, on the 27th June, to proceed to Ticonderoga, and "should he find it practicable, and not disagreeable to the Canadians, immediately to take possession of St. John's and Montreal, and pursue such other measures in Canada as might have a tendency to promote the peace and security of these provinces."

It behoved General Schuyler to be on the alert, lest the enterprise should be snatched from his hands. Ethan Allen and Seth Warner were at Bennington, among the Green Mountains. Enlistments were going on, but too slow for Allen's impatience, who had his old hankering for a partisan foray. In a letter to Governor Trumbull (July 12th), he writes, "Were it not that the grand Continental Congress had totally incorporated the Green Mountain Boys into a battalion under certain regulations and command, I would forthwith advance them into Canada and invest Montreal, *exclusive of any help from the colonies;* though under present circumstances I would not, for my right arm, act without or contrary to order. *If my fond zeal for reducing the King's fortresses and destroying or imprisoning his troops in Canada be the result of enthusiasm*, I hope and expect the wisdom of the Continent will treat it as such; and on the other hand, if it proceed from sound policy, that the plan will be adopted."[1]

Schuyler arrived at Ticonderoga on the 18th of July. A letter to Washington, to whom, as commander-in-chief, he made constant reports, gives a striking picture of a frontier post in those crude days of the Revolution.

"You will expect that I should say something about this place and the troops here. Not one earthly thing for

[1] Force's Am. Archives, ii. 1649.

offence or defence has been done; *the commanding officer has no orders; he only came to reinforce the garrison, and he expected the general.* About ten last night I arrived at the landing-place, at the north end of Lake George; a post occupied by a captain and one hundred men. A sentinel, on being informed that I was in the boat, quitted his post to go and awaken the guard, consisting of three men, in which he had no success. I walked up and came to another, a sergeant's guard. Here the sentinel challenged, but suffered me to come up to him; the whole guard, like the first, in the soundest sleep. With a penknife only I could have cut off both guards, and then have set fire to the block-house, destroyed the stores, and starved the people here. At this post I had pointedly recommended vigilance and care, as all the stores from Lake George must necessarily be landed here. But I hope to get the better of this inattention. The officers and men are all good-looking people, and decent in their deportment, and I really believe will make good soldiers as soon as I can get the better of this *nonchalance* of theirs. Bravery, I believe, they are far from wanting."

Colonel Hinman, it will be recollected, was in temporary command of Ticonderoga, if that could be called a command where none seemed to obey. The garrison was about twelve hundred strong; the greater part Connecticut men brought by himself; some were New York troops, and some few Green Mountain Boys. Schuyler, on taking command, despatched a confidential agent into Canada, Major John Brown, an American, who resided on the Sorel River, and was popular among the Canadians. He was to collect information as to the British forces and fortifications, and to ascertain how an invasion and an attack on St. John's would be considered by the people of the province: in the mean time, Schuyler set diligently to work to build boats and prepare for the enterprise, should it ultimately be ordered by Congress.

Schuyler was an authoritative man, and inherited from his Dutch ancestry a great love of order; he was excessively annoyed, therefore, by the confusion and negligence prevalent around him, and the difficulties and delays thereby occasioned. He chafed in spirit at the disregard

of discipline among his yeoman soldiery, and their opposition to all system and regularity. This was especially the case with the troops from Connecticut, officered generally by their own neighbours and familiar companions, and unwilling to acknowledge the authority of a commander from a different province. He poured out his complaints in a friendly letter to Washington: the latter consoled him by stating his own troubles and grievances in the camp at Cambridge, and the spirit with which he coped with them. "From my own experience," writes he (July 28), "I can easily judge of your difficulties in introducing order and discipline into troops who have, from their infancy, imbibed ideas of the most contrary kind. It would be far beyond the compass of a letter, for me to describe the situation of things here [at Cambridge] on my arrival. Perhaps you will only be able to judge of it, from my assuring you, that mine must be a portrait at full length of what you have had in miniature. Confusion and discord reigned in every department, which, in a little time, must have ended either in the separation of the army, or fatal contests with one another. The better genius of America has prevailed, and, most happily, the ministerial troops have not availed themselves of these advantages, till, I trust, the opportunity is in a great measure passed over. * * * We mend every day, and, I flatter myself, that in a little time we shall work up these raw materials into a good manufacture. I must recommend to you, what I endeavour to practise myself, patience and perseverance."

Schuyler took the friendly admonition in the spirit in which it was given. "I can easily conceive," writes he (Aug. 6th), "that my difficulties are only a faint semblance of yours. Yes, my general, I will strive to copy your bright example, and patiently and steadily persevere in that line which only can promise the wished-for reformation."

He had calculated on being joined by this time by the regiment of Green Mountain Boys, which Ethan Allen and Seth Warner had undertaken to raise in the New Hampshire Grants. Unfortunately, a quarrel had arisen between these brothers in arms, which filled the Green Mountains

with discord and party feud. The election of officers took place on the 27th of July. It was made by committees from the different townships. Ethan Allen was entirely passed by, and Seth Warner nominated as lieutenant-colonel of the regiment. Allen was thunderstruck at finding himself thus suddenly dismounted. His patriotism and love of adventure, however, were not quelled: and he forthwith repaired to the army at Ticonderoga to offer himself as a volunteer.

Schuyler, at first, hesitated to accept his services. He was aware of his aspiring notions, and feared there would be a difficulty in keeping him within due bounds, but was at length persuaded by his officers to retain him, to act as a pioneer on the Canadian frontier.

In a letter from camp, Allen gave Governor Trumbull an account of the downfall of his towering hopes. "Notwithstanding my zeal and success in my country's cause, the old farmers on the New Hampshire Grants, who do not incline to go to war, have met in a committee meeting, and in the nomination of officers for the regiment of Green Mountain Boys, have wholly omitted me."

His letter has a consolatory postscript. "I find myself in the favour of the officers of the army and the young Green Mountain Boys. How the old men came to reject me I cannot conceive, inasmuch as I saved them from the encroachments of New York."[1]—The old men probably doubted his discretion.

Schuyler was on the alert with respect to the expedition against Canada. From his agent Major Brown, and from other sources, he had learnt that there were but about seven hundred king's troops in that province; three hundred of them at St. John's, about fifty at Quebec, the remainder at Montreal, Chamblee, and the upper posts. Colonel Guy Johnson was at Montreal with three hundred men, mostly his tenants, and with a number of Indians. Two batteries had been finished at St. John's, mounting nine guns each: other works were intrenched and picketed. Two large row galleys were on the stocks, and would soon be finished. Now was the time, according to his informants,

[1] American Archives, Fourth Series, iii. 17.

to carry Canada. It might be done with great ease and little cost. The Canadians were disaffected to British rule, and would join the Americans, and so would many of the Indians.

"I am prepared," writes he to Washington, "to move against the enemy, unless your Excellency and Congress should direct otherwise. In the course of a few days I expect to receive the ultimate determination. Whatever it may be, I shall try to execute it in such a manner as will promote the just cause in which we are engaged."

While awaiting orders on this head, he repaired to Albany, to hold a conference and negotiate a treaty with the Caughnawagas, and the warriors of the Six Nations, whom, as one of the commissioners of Indian affairs, he had invited to meet him at that place. General Richard Montgomery was to remain in command at Ticonderoga, during his absence, and to urge forward the military preparations. As the subsequent fortunes of this gallant officer are inseparably connected with the Canadian campaign, and have endeared his name to Americans, we pause to give a few particulars concerning him.

General Richard Montgomery was of a good family in the north of Ireland, where he was born in 1736. He entered the army when about eighteen years of age; served in America in the French war; won a lieutenancy by gallant conduct at Louisburg; followed General Amherst to Lake Champlain, and, after the conquest of Canada, was promoted to a captaincy for his services in the West Indies.

After the peace of Versailles he resided in England: but, about three years before the breaking out of the Revolution, he sold out his commission in the army and emigrated to New York. Here he married the eldest daughter of Judge Robert R. Livingston, of the Clermont branch of that family; and took up his residence on an estate which he had purchased in Dutchess County on the banks of the Hudson.

Being known to be in favour of the popular cause, he was drawn reluctantly from his rural abode, to represent his county in the first convention of the province; and on the recent organization of the army, his military reputation gained him the unsought commission of brigadier-general.

"It is an event," writes he to a friend, "which must put an end for a while, perhaps for ever, to the quiet scheme of life I had prescribed for myself; for, though entirely unexpected and undesired by me, the will of an oppressed people, compelled to choose between liberty and slavery, must be obeyed."

At the time of receiving his commission, Montgomery was about thirty-nine years of age, and the *beau idéal* of a soldier. His form was well proportioned and vigorous; his countenance expressive and prepossessing; he was cool and discriminating in council, energetic and fearless in action. His principles commanded the respect of friends and foes, and he was noted for winning the affections of the soldiery.

While these things were occurring at Ticonderoga, several Indian chiefs made their appearance in the camp at Cambridge. They came in savage state and costume, as ambassadors from their respective tribes, to have a talk about the impending invasion of Canada. One was chief of the Caughnawaga tribe, whose residence was on the banks of the St. Lawrence, six miles above Montreal. Others were from St. Francis, about forty-five leagues above Quebec, and were of a warlike tribe, from which hostilities had been especially apprehended.

Washington, accustomed to deal with the red warriors of the wilderness, received them with great ceremonial. They dined at head-quarters among his officers, and it is observed that to some of the latter they might have served as models; such was their grave dignity and decorum.

A council fire was held. The sachems all offered, on behalf of their tribes, to take up the hatchet for the Americans, should the latter invade Canada. The offer was embarrassing. Congress had publicly resolved to seek nothing but neutrality from the Indian nations, unless the ministerial agents should make an offensive alliance with them. The chief of the St. Francis tribe declared that Governor Carleton had endeavoured to persuade him to take up the hatchet against the Americans, but in vain. "As our ancestors gave this country to you," added he, grandly, "we would not have you destroyed by England; but are ready to afford you our assistance."

Washington wished to be certain of the conduct of the enemy, before he gave a reply to these Indian overtures. He wrote by express, therefore, to General Schuyler, requesting him to ascertain the intentions of the British governor with respect to the native tribes.

By the same express he communicated a plan which had occupied his thoughts for several days. As the contemplated movement of Schuyler would probably cause all the British force in Canada to be concentrated in the neighbourhood of Montreal and St. Johns, he proposed to send off an expedition of ten or twelve hundred men, to penetrate to Quebec by the way of the Kennebec River. "If you are resolved to proceed," writes he to Schuyler, "which I gather from your last letter is your intention, it would make a diversion that would distract Carleton. He must either break up, and follow this party to Quebec, by which he would leave you a free passage, or he must suffer that important place to fall into other hands; an event that would have a decisive effect and influence on the public interest. * * * * The few whom I have consulted on the project approve it much, but the final determination is deferred until I hear from you. Not a moment's time is to be lost in the preparations for this enterprise, if the advices from you favour it. With the utmost expedition the season will be considerably advanced, so that you will dismiss the express as soon as possible."

The express found Schuyler in Albany, where he had been attending the conference with the Six Nations. He had just received intelligence which convinced him of the propriety of an expedition into Canada; had sent word to General Montgomery to get everything ready for it, and was on the point of departing for Ticonderoga to carry it into effect. In reply to Washington, he declared his conviction, from various accounts which he had received, that Carleton and his agents were exciting the Indian tribes to hostility. "I should, therefore, not hesitate one moment," adds he, "to employ any savages that might be willing to join us."

He expressed himself delighted with Washington's project of sending off an expedition to Quebec, regretting only that it had not been thought of earlier. "Should the de-

tachment from your body penetrate into Canada," added he, "and we meet with success, Canada must inevitably fall into our hands."

Having sent off these despatches, Schuyler hastened back to Ticonderoga. Before he reached there, Montgomery had received intelligence that Carleton had completed his armed vessels at St. Johns, and was about to send them into Lake Champlain by the Sorel River. No time, therefore, was to be lost in getting possession of the Isle aux Noix, which commanded the entrance to that river. Montgomery hastened, therefore, to embark with about a thousand men, which were as many as the boats now ready could hold, taking with him two pieces of artillery; with this force he set off down the lake. A letter to General Schuyler explained the cause of his sudden departure, and entreated him to follow on in a whale-boat, leaving the residue of the artillery to come on as soon as conveyances could be procured.

Schuyler arrived at Ticonderoga on the night of the 30th of August, but too ill of a bilious fever to push on in a whale-boat. He caused, however, a bed to be prepared for him in a covered bateau, and, ill as he was, continued forward on the following day. On the 4th of September, he overtook Montgomery at the Isle la Motte, where he had been detained by contrary weather, and, assuming command of the little army, kept on the same day to the Isle aux Noix, about twelve miles south of St. Johns—where for the present we shall leave him, and return to the headquarters of the commander-in-chief.

CHAPTER XLVII.

A Challenge declined—A Blow meditated—A cautious Council of War—Preparation for the Quebec Expedition—Benedict Arnold the Leader—Advice and Instructions—Departure—General Schuyler on the Sorel—Reconnoitres St. Johns—Camp at Isle aux Noix—Illness of Schuyler—Returns to Ticonderoga—Expedition of Montgomery against St. Johns—Letter of Ethan Allen—His dash against Montreal—Its Catastrophe—A Hero in Irons—Correspondence of Washington with Schuyler and Arnold—His anxiety about them.

THE siege of Boston had been kept up for several weeks without any remarkable occurrence. The British remained

within their lines, diligently strengthening them; the besiegers having received further supplies of ammunition, were growing impatient of a state of inactivity. Towards the latter part of August there were rumours from Boston, that the enemy were preparing for a sortie. Washington was resolved to provoke it by a kind of challenge. He accordingly detached fourteen hundred men to seize at night upon a height within musket shot of the enemy's line on Charlestown Neck, presuming that the latter would sally forth on the following day to dispute possession of it, and thus be drawn into a general battle. The task was executed with silence and celerity, and by daybreak the hill presented to the astonished foe, the aspect of a fortified post.

The challenge was not accepted. The British opened a heavy cannonade from Bunker's Hill, but kept within their works. The Americans, scant of ammunition, could only reply with a single nine-pounder; this, however, sank one of the floating batteries which guarded the neck. They went on to complete and strengthen this advanced post, exposed to daily cannonade and bombardment, which, however, did but little injury. They continued to answer from time to time with a single gun, reserving their ammunition for a general action. "We are just in the situation of a man with little money in his pocket," writes Secretary Reed; "he will do twenty mean things to prevent his breaking in upon his little stock. We are obliged to bear with the rascals on Bunker's Hill, when a few shot now and then in return would keep our men attentive to their business, and give the enemy alarms."[1]

The evident unwillingness of the latter to come forth was perplexing. "Unless the ministerial troops in Boston are waiting for reinforcements," writes Washington, "I cannot devise what they are staying there for, nor why, as they affect to despise the Americans, they do not come forth and put an end to the contest at once."

Perhaps they persuaded themselves that his army, composed of crude, half-disciplined levies from different and distant quarters, would gradually fall asunder and disperse,

[1] Life of Reed, vol. i. 119.

or that its means of subsistence would be exhausted. He had his own fears on the subject, and looked forward with doubt and anxiety to a winter's campaign; the heavy expense that would be incurred in providing barracks, fuel and warm clothing; the difficulty there would be of keeping together, through the rigorous season, troops unaccustomed to military hardships, and none of whose terms of enlistment extended beyond the 1st of January: the supplies of ammunition, too, that would be required for protracted operations; the stock of powder on hand, notwithstanding the most careful husbandry, being fearfully small. Revolving these circumstances in his mind, he rode thoughtfully about the commanding points in the vicinity of Boston, considering how he might strike a decisive blow that would put an end to the murmuring inactivity of the army, and relieve the country from the consuming expense of maintaining it. The result was a letter to the major and brigadier generals, summoning them to a council of war to be held at the distance of three days, and giving them previous intimation of its purpose. It was to know whether, in their judgment, a successful attack might not be made upon the troops at Boston by means of boats, in co-operation with an attempt upon their lines at Roxbury. "The success of such an enterprise," adds he, "depends, I well know, upon the Allwise Disposer of events, and it is not within the reach of human wisdom to foretell the issue; but if the prospect is fair, the undertaking is justifiable."

He proceeded to state the considerations already cited, which appeared to justify it. The council having thus had time for previous deliberation, met on the 11th of September. It was composed of Major-generals Ward, Lee, and Putnam, and Brigadier-generals Thomas, Heath, Sullivan, Spencer, and Greene. They unanimously pronounced the suggested attempt inexpedient, at least for the present.

It certainly was bold and hazardous, yet it seems to have taken strong hold on the mind of the commander-in-chief, usually so cautious. "I cannot say," writes he to the President of Congress, "that I have wholly laid it aside; but new events may occasion new measures. Of this I

hope the honourable Congress can need no assurance, that there is not a man in America who more earnestly wishes such a termination of the campaign, as to make the army no longer necessary."

In the mean time, as it was evident the enemy did not intend to come out, but were only strengthening their defences and preparing for winter, Washington was enabled to turn his attention to the expedition to be sent into Canada by the way of the Kennebec River.

A detachment of about eleven hundred men, chosen for the purpose, was soon encamped on Cambridge Common. There were ten companies of New England infantry, some of them from General Greene's Rhode Island regiments; three rifle companies from Pennsylvania and Virginia, one of them Captain Daniel Morgan's famous company; and a number of volunteers, among whom was Aaron Burr, then but twenty years of age, and just commencing his varied, brilliant, but ultimately unfortunate career.

The proposed expedition was wild and perilous, and required a hardy, skilful, and intrepid leader. Such a one was at hand. Benedict Arnold was at Cambridge, occupied in settling his accounts with the Massachusetts committee of safety. These were nearly adjusted. Whatever faults may have been found with his conduct in some particulars, his exploits on Lake Champlain had atoned for them: for valour in time of war covers a multitude of sins. It was thought too by some, that he had been treated harshly, and there was a disposition to soothe his irritated pride. Washington had given him an honourable reception at headquarters, and now considered him the very man for the present enterprise. He had shown aptness for military service, whether on land or water. He was acquainted, too, with Canada, and especially with Quebec, having, in the course of his chequered life, traded in horses between that place and the West Indies. With these considerations he intrusted him with the command of the expedition, giving him the commission of lieutenant colonel in the continental army.

As he would be intrusted with dangerous powers, Washington, beside a general letter of instructions, addressed a special one to him individually, full of cautious

and considerate advice. "Upon your conduct and courage, and that of the officers and soldiers detailed on this expedition, not only the success of the present enterprise, and your own honour, but the safety and welfare of the whole continent, may depend. I charge you, therefore, and the officers and soldiers under your command, as you value your own safety and honour, and the favour and esteem of your country, that you consider yourselves as marching, not through the country of an enemy, but of our friends and brethren; for such the inhabitants of Canada and the Indian nations have approved themselves, in this unhappy contest between Great Britain and America; and that you check, by every motive of duty and fear of punishment, every attempt to plunder or insult the inhabitants of Canada. Should any American soldier be so base and infamous as to injure any Canadian or Indian, in his person or property, I do most earnestly enjoin you to bring him to such severe and exemplary punishment, as the enormity of the crime may require. Should it extend to death itself, it will not be disproportioned to its guilt, at such a time, and in such a cause. * * * * I also give in charge to you, to avoid all disrespect to the religion of the country and its ceremonies. * * While we are contending for our own liberty, we should be very cautious not to violate the rights of conscience in others, ever considering that God alone is the judge of the hearts of men, and to him only, in this case, are they answerable."

In the general letter of instructions, Washington inserted the following clause. "If Lord Chatham's son should be in Canada, and in any way fall into your power, you are enjoined to treat him with all possible deference and respect. You cannot err in paying too much honour to the son of so illustrious a character and so true a friend to America."

Arnold was, moreover, furnished with handbills for distribution in Canada, setting forth the friendly objects of the present expedition, as well as of that under General Schuyler; and calling on the Canadians to furnish necessaries and accommodations of every kind; for which they were assured ample compensation.

On the 13th of September, Arnold struck his tents, and

set out in high spirits. More fortunate than his rival, Ethan Allen, he had attained the object of his ambition, the command of an expedition into Canada; and trusted in the capture of Quebec, to eclipse even the surprise of Ticonderoga.

Washington enjoined upon him to push forward, as rapidly as possible, success depending upon celerity; and counted the days as they elapsed after his departure, impatient to receive tidings of his progress up the Kennebec, and expecting that the expedition would reach Quebec about the middle of October. In the interim came letters from General Schuyler, giving particulars of the main expedition.

In a preceding chapter we left the general and his little army at the Isle aux Noix, near the Sorel River, the outlet of the lake. Thence, on the 5th of September, he sent Colonel Ethan Allen and Major Brown to reconnoitre the country between that river and the St. Lawrence, to distribute friendly addresses among the people and ascertain their feelings. This done, and having landed his baggage and provisions, the general proceeded along the Sorel River the next day with his boats, until within two miles of St. Johns, when a cannonade was opened from the fort. Keeping on for half a mile further, he landed his troops in a deep, close swamp, where they had a sharp skirmish with an ambuscade of tories and Indians, whom they beat off with some loss on both sides. Night coming on, they cast up a small intrenchment, and encamped, disturbed occasionally by shells from the fort, which, however, did no other mischief than slightly wounding a lieutenant.

In the night the camp was visited secretly by a person, who informed General Schuyler of the state of the fort. The works were completed, and furnished with cannon. A vessel pierced for sixteen guns was launched, and would be ready to sail in three or four days. It was not probable that any Canadians would join the army, being disposed to remain neutral. This intelligence being discussed in a council of war in the morning, it was determined that they had neither men nor artillery sufficient to undertake a siege. They returned, therefore, to the Isle aux Noix, cast up fortifications, and threw a boom across the channel of

the river to prevent the passage of the enemy's vessel into the lake, and awaited the arrival of artillery and reinforcements from Ticonderoga.

In the course of a few days the expected reinforcements arrived, and with them a small train of artillery. Ethan Allen also returned from his reconnoitring expedition, of which he made a most encouraging report. The Canadian captains of militia were ready, he said, to join the Americans, whenever they should appear with sufficient force. He had held talks, too, with the Indians, and found them well disposed. In a word, he was convinced that an attack on St. Johns, and an inroad into the province, would meet with hearty co-operation.

Preparations were now made for the investment of St. Johns by land and water. Major Brown, who had already acted as a scout, was sent with one hundred Americans and about thirty Canadians towards Chamblee, to make friends in that quarter, and to join the army as soon as it should arrive at St. Johns.

To quiet the restless activity of Ethan Allen, who had no command in the army, he was sent with an escort of thirty men to retrace his steps, penetrate to La Prairie, and beat up for recruits among the people whom he had recently visited.

For some time past, General Schuyler had been struggling with a complication of maladies, but exerting himself to the utmost in the harassing business of the camp, still hoping to be able to move with the army. When everything was nearly ready, he was attacked in the night by a severe access of his disorder, which confined him to his bed, and compelled him to surrender the conduct of the expedition to General Montgomery. Since he could be of no further use, therefore, in this quarter, he caused his bed, as before, to be placed on board a covered bateau, and set off for Ticonderoga, to hasten forward reinforcements and supplies. An hour after his departure, he met Colonel Seth Warner, with one hundred and seventy Green Mountain Boys, steering for the camp, "being the first," adds he, "that have appeared of that boasted corps." Some had mutinied and deserted the colonel, and the remainder were at Crown Point; whence they were about to embark.

Such was the purport of different letters received from Schuyler; the last bearing date September 20th. Washington was deeply concerned when informed that he had quitted the army, supposing that General Wooster, as the eldest brigadier, would take rank and command of Montgomery, and considering him deficient in the activity and energy required by the difficult service in which he was engaged. "I am, therefore," writes he to Schuyler, "much alarmed for Arnold, whose expedition was built upon yours, and who will infallibly perish, if the invasion and entry into Canada are abandoned by your successor. I hope by this time the penetration into Canada by your army is effected; but if it is not, and there are any intentions to lay it aside, I beg it may be done in such a manner that Arnold may be saved, by giving him notice; and in the meantime, your army may keep such appearances as to fix Carleton, and to prevent the force of Canada being turned wholly upon Arnold.

"Should this find you at Albany, and General Wooster about taking the command, I entreat you to impress him strongly with the importance and necessity of proceeding, or so to conduct, that Arnold may have time to retreat."

What caused this immediate solicitude about Arnold, was a letter received from him, dated ten days previously from Fort Western, on the Kennebec River. He had sent reconnoitring parties ahead in light canoes, to gain intelligence from the Indians, and take the courses and distances to Dead River, a branch of the Kennebec, and he was now forwarding his troops in bateaux in five divisions, one day's march apart; Morgan with his riflemen in the first division, Lieutenant-colonel Roger Enos commanding the last. As soon as the last division should be under way, Arnold was to set off in a light skiff to overtake the advance. Chaudiere Pond, on the Chaudiere River, was the appointed rendezvous, whence they were to march in a body towards Quebec.

Judging from the date of the letter, Arnold must at this time be making his way, by land and water, through an uninhabited and unexplored wilderness, and beyond the reach of recall; his situation, therefore, would be desperate should General Wooster fail to follow up the campaign

against St. Johns. The solicitude of Washington on his account was heightened by the consciousness, that the hazardous enterprise in which he was engaged, had chiefly been set on foot by himself, and he felt in some degree responsible for the safety of the resolute partisan and his companions.

Fortunately, Wooster was not the successor to Schuyler in the command of the expedition. Washington was mistaken as to the rank of his commission, which was one degree lower than that of Montgomery. The veteran himself, who was a gallant soldier, and had seen service in two wars, expressed himself nobly in the matter, in reply to some inquiry made by Schuyler. "I have the cause of my country too much at heart," said he, "to attempt to make any difficulty or uneasiness in the army, upon whom the success of an enterprise of almost infinite importance to the country is now depending. I shall consider my rank in the army what my commission from the Continental Congress makes it, and shall not attempt to dispute the command with General Montgomery at St. Johns." We shall give some further particulars concerning this expedition against St. Johns, towards which Washington was turning so anxious an eye.

On the 16th of September, the day after Schuyler's departure for Ticonderoga, Montgomery proceeded to carry out the plans which had been concerted between them. Landing on the 17th at the place where they had formerly encamped, within a mile and a half of the fort, he detached a force of five hundred men, among whom were three hundred Green Mountain Boys under Colonel Seth Warner, to take a position at the junction of two roads leading to Montreal and Chamblee, so as to intercept relief from those points. He now proceeded to invest St. Johns. A battery was erected on a point of land commanding the fort, the ship yards, and the armed schooner. Another was thrown up in the woods on the east side of the fort, at six hundred yards distance, and furnished with two small mortars. All this was done under an incessant fire from the enemy, which, as yet, was but feebly returned.

St. Johns had a garrison of five or six hundred regulars and two hundred Canadian militia. Its commander, Major

Preston, made a brave resistance. Montgomery had not proper battering cannon; his mortars were defective; his artillerists unpractised, and the engineer ignorant of the first principles of his art. The siege went on slowly, until the arrival of an artillery company under Captain Lamb, expedited from Saratoga by General Schuyler. Lamb, who was an able officer, immediately bedded a thirteen-inch mortar, and commenced a fire of shot and shells upon the fort. The distance, however, was too great, and the positions of the batteries were ill chosen.

A flourishing letter was received by the general from Colonel Ethan Allen, giving hope of further reinforcement. "I am now," writes he, "at the Parish of St. Ours, four leagues from Sorel to the south. I have two hundred and fifty Canadians under arms. As I march, they gather fast. You may rely on it, that I shall join you in about three days, with five hundred or more Canadian volunteers. I could raise one or two thousand in a week's time; but I will first visit the army with a less number, and, if necessary, go again recruiting. Those that used to be enemies to our cause, come cap in hand to me; and I swear by the Lord, I can raise three times the number of our army in Canada, provided you continue the siege. * * * * The eyes of all America, nay, of Europe, are or will be on the economy of this army, and the consequences attending it."[1]

Allen was actually on his way towards St. Johns, when, between Longueil and La Prairie, he met Colonel Brown with his party of Americans and Canadians. A conversation took place between them. Brown assured him that the garrison at Montreal did not exceed thirty men, and might easily be surprised. Allen's partisan spirit was instantly excited. Here was a chance for another bold stroke equal to that at Ticonderoga. A plan was forthwith agreed upon. Allen was to return to Longueil, which is nearly opposite Montreal, and cross the St. Lawrence in canoes in the night, so as to land a little below the town. Brown, with two hundred men, was to cross above, and Montreal was to be attacked simultaneously at opposite points.

[1] Am. Archives, Fourth Series, iii. 754.

All this was arranged and put in action without the consent or knowledge of General Montgomery; Allen was again the partisan leader, acting from individual impulse. His late letter also to General Montgomery would seem to have partaken of fanfaronade; for the whole force with which he undertook his part of this inconsiderate enterprise, was thirty Americans and eighty Canadians. With these he crossed the river on the night of the 24th of September, the few canoes found at Longueil having to pass to and fro repeatedly, before his petty force could be landed. Guards were stationed on the roads to prevent any one passing and giving the alarm in Montreal. Day dawned, but there was no signal of Major Brown having performed his part of the scheme. The enterprise seems to have been as ill concerted, as it was ill advised. The day advanced, but still no signal; it was evident Major Brown had not crossed. Allen would gladly have recrossed the river, but it was too late. An alarm had been given to the town, and he soon found himself encountered by about forty regular soldiers, and a hasty levy of Canadians and Indians. A smart action ensued; most of Allen's Canadian recruits gave way and fled, a number of Americans were slain, and he at length surrendered to the British officer, Major Campbell, being promised honourable terms for himself and thirty-eight of his men, who remained with him, seven of whom were wounded. The prisoners were marched into the town and delivered over to General Prescott, the commandant. Their rough appearance, and rude equipments, were not likely to gain them favour in the eyes of the military tactician, who doubtless considered them as little better than a band of freebooters on a maraud. Their leader, albeit a colonel, must have seemed worthy of the band; for Allen was arrayed in rough frontier style; a deer-skin jacket, a vest and breeches of coarse serge, worsted stockings, stout shoes, and a red woollen cap.

We give Allen's own account of his reception by the British officer. "He asked me my name, which I told him. He then asked me whether I was that Colonel Allen who took Ticonderoga. I told him I was the very man. Then he shook his cane over my head, calling

me many hard names, among which, he frequently used the word rebel, and put himself in a great rage."[1]

Ethan Allen, according to his own account, answered with becoming spirit. Indeed he gives somewhat of a melodramatic scene, which ended by his being sent on board of the "Gaspee" schooner of war, heavily ironed, to be transported to England for trial; Prescott giving him the parting assurance, sealed with an emphatic oath, that he would grace a halter at Tyburn.

Neither Allen's courage nor his rhetorical vein deserted him on this trying occasion. From his place of confinement, he indited the following epistle to the general:—

"Honourable Sir,—In the wheel of transitory events I find myself prisoner, and in irons. Probably your honour has certain reasons to me inconceivable, though I challenge an instance of this sort of economy of the Americans during the late war to any officers of the crown. On my part, I have to assure your honour, that when I had the command, and took Captain Delaplace and Lieutenant Fulton, with the garrison of Ticonderoga, I treated them with every mark of friendship and generosity, the evidence of which is notorious, even in Canada. I have only to add, that I expect an honourable and humane treatment, as an officer of my rank and merit should have, and subscribe myself your honour's most obedient servant,

"Ethan Allen."

In the British publication from which we cite the above, the following note is appended to the letter, probably on the authority of General Prescott: "N.B.—The author of the above letter is an outlaw, and a reward offered by the New York Assembly for apprehending him."[2]

The reckless dash at Montreal, was viewed with concern by the American commander. "I am apprehensive of disagreeable consequences arising from Mr. Allen's imprudence," writes General Schuyler. "I always dreaded his impatience of subordination, and it was not until after a solemn promise made me in the presence of several officers, that he would demean himself with propriety,

[1] Am. Archives, iii. 800. [2] Remembrancer, ii. 51.

that I would permit him to attend the army; nor would I have consented then, had not his solicitations been backed by several officers."

The conduct of Allen was also severely censured by Washington. "His misfortune," said he, "will, I hope, teach a lesson of prudence and subordination to others who may be ambitious to outshine their general officers, and, regardless of order and duty, rush into enterprises which have unfavourable effects on the public, and are destructive to themselves."

Partisan exploit had, in fact, inflated the vanity and bewildered the imagination of Allen, and unfitted him for regular warfare. Still his name will ever be a favourite one with his countrymen. Even his occasional rhodomontade will be tolerated with a good-humoured smile, backed as it was by deeds of daring courage; and among the hardy pioneers of our Revolution whose untutored valour gave the first earnests of its triumphs, will be remembered, with honour, the rough Green Mountain partisan, who seized upon the "Keys of Champlain."

In the letters of Schuyler, which gave Washington accounts, from time to time, of the preceding events, were sad repinings at his own illness, and the multiplied annoyances which beset him. "The vexation of spirit under which I labour," writes he, "that a barbarous complication of disorders should prevent me from reaping those laurels for which I have unwearicdly wrought since I was honoured with this command; the anxiety I have suffered since my arrival here (at Ticonderoga), lest the army should starve, occasioned by a scandalous want of subordination and inattention to my orders, in some of the officers that I left to command at the different posts; the vast variety of disagreeable and vexatious incidents that almost every hour arise in some department or other, not only retard my cure, but have put me considerably back for some days past. If Job had been a general in my situation, his memory had not been so famous for patience. But the glorious end we have in view, and which I have confident hope will be attained, will atone for all." Washington replied in that spirit of friendship which existed between them. "You do me justice in believing that I

feel the utmost anxiety for your situation, that I sympathise with you in all your distresses, and shall most heartily share in the joy of your success. My anxiety extends itself to poor Arnold, whose fate depends upon the issue of your campaign. * * * * * The more I reflect upon the importance of your expedition, the greater is my concern, lest it should sink under insuperable difficulties. I look upon the interests and salvation of our bleeding country in a great degree as depending upon your success."

Shortly after writing the above, and while he was still full of solicitude about the fate of Arnold, he received a despatch from the latter, dated October 13th, from the great portage or carrying-place between the Kennebec and Dead River.

"Your Excellency," writes Arnold, "may possibly think we have been tardy in our march, as we have gained so little; but when you consider the badness and weight of the bateaux, and large quantities of provisions, &c., we have been obliged to force up against a very rapid stream, where you would have taken the men for amphibious animals, as they were a great part of the time under water: add to this the great fatigue in the portage, you will think I have pushed the men as fast as they could possibly bear."

The toils of the expedition up the Kennebec River had indeed been excessive. Part of the men of each division managed the boats—part marched along the banks. Those on board had to labour against swift currents; to unload at rapids; transport the cargoes, and sometimes the boats themselves, for some distance on their shoulders, and then to reload. They were days in making their way round stupendous cataracts; several times their boats were upset and filled with water, to the loss or damage of arms, ammunition, and provisions.

Those on land had to scramble over rocks and precipices; to struggle through swamps and fenny streams; or cut their way through tangled thickets, which reduced their clothes to rags. With all their efforts, their progress was but from four to ten miles a day. At night the men of each division encamped together.

By the time they arrived at the place whence the letter was written, fatigue, swamp fevers, and desertion had

reduced their numbers to about nine hundred and fifty effective men. Arnold, however, wrote in good heart. "The last division," said he, "is just arrived; three divisions are over the first carrying-place, and as the men are in high spirits, I make no doubt of reaching the river Chaudiere in eight or ten days, the greatest difficulty being, I hope, already past."

He had some days previously despatched an Indian, whom he considered trusty, with a letter for General Schuyler, apprising him of his whereabouts, but as yet had received no intelligence either of, or from the general, nor did he expect to receive any until he should reach Chaudiere Pond. There he calculated to meet the return of his express, and then to determine his plan of operations.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

British in Boston send out Cruisers—Depredations of Captain Wallace along the Coast—Treason in the Camp—Arrest of Dr. Church—His Trial and Fate—Conflagration of Falmouth—Irritation throughout the Country—Fitting out of Vessels of War—Embarkation of General Gage for England—Committee from Congress—Conferences with Washington—Resolutions of Congress to carry on the War—Return of Secretary Reed to Philadelphia.

While the two expeditions were threatening Canada from different quarters, the war was going on along the seaboard. The British in Boston, cut off from supplies by land, fitted out small armed vessels to seek them along the coast of New England. The inhabitants drove their cattle into the interior, or boldly resisted the aggressors. Parties landing to forage were often repulsed by hasty levies of the yeomanry. Scenes of ravage and violence occurred. Stonington was cannonaded, and further measures of vengeance were threatened by Captain Wallace of the "Rose" man-of-war, a naval officer, who had acquired an almost piratical reputation along the coast, and had his rendezvous in the harbour of Newport; domineering over the waters of Rhode Island.[1]

About this time there was an occurrence, which caused

[1] Gov. Trumbull to Washington. Sparks' Corresp. of the Rev., i. 27.

great excitement in the armies. A woman, coming from the camp at Cambridge, applied to a Mr. Wainwood of Newport, Rhode Island, to aid her in gaining access to Captain Wallace, or Mr. Dudley, the collector. Wainwood, who was a patriot, drew from her the object of her errand. She was the bearer of a letter from some one in camp, directed to Major Kane in Boston; but which she was to deliver either to the captain or the collector. Suspecting something wrong, he prevailed upon her to leave it with him for delivery. After her departure he opened the letter. It was written in cipher which he could not read. He took it to Mr. Henry Ward, secretary of the colony. The latter, apprehending it might contain treasonable information to the enemy, transmitted it to General Greene, who laid it before Washington.

A letter in cipher, to a person in Boston, hostile to the cause, and to be delivered into the hands of Captain Wallace the nautical marauder!—there evidently was treason in the camp; but how was the traitor to be detected? The first step was to secure the woman, the bearer of the letter, who had returned to Cambridge. Tradition gives us a graphic scene connected with her arrest. Washington was in his chamber at head-quarters, when he beheld from his window, General Putnam approaching on horseback, with a stout woman *en croupe* behind him. He had pounced upon the culprit. The group presented by the old general and his prize, overpowered even Washington's gravity. It was the only occasion throughout the whole campaign on which he was known to laugh heartily. He had recovered his gravity by the time the delinquent was brought to the foot of the broad staircase in head-quarters, and assured her in a severe tone from the head of it, that, unless she confessed everything before the next morning, a halter would be in readiness for her.

So far the tradition;—his own letter to the President of Congress states that, for a long time, the woman was proof against every threat and persuasion to discover the author, but at length named Dr. Benjamin Church. It seemed incredible. He had borne the character of a distinguished patriot: he was the author of various patriotic writings; a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives;

one of the committee deputed to conduct Washington to the army, and at present he discharged the functions of surgeon-general and director of the hospitals. That such a man should be in traitorous correspondence with the enemy, was a thunderstroke. Orders were given to secure him and his papers. On his arrest he was extremely agitated, but acknowledged the letter, and said it would be found, when deciphered, to contain nothing criminal. His papers were searched, but nothing of a treasonable nature discovered. "It appeared, however, on inquiry," says Washington, "that a confidant had been among the papers before my messenger arrived."

The letter was deciphered. It gave a description of the army. The doctor made an awkward defence, protesting that he had given an exaggerated account of the American force, for the purpose of deterring the enemy from attacking the American lines in their present defenceless condition from the want of powder. His explanations were not satisfactory. The army and country were exceedingly irritated. In a council of war he was convicted of criminal correspondence; he was expelled from the Massachusetts House of Representatives, and the Continental Congress ultimately resolved that he should be confined in some secure gaol in Connecticut, without the use of pen, ink, or paper; and that no person be allowed to converse with him, except in the presence and hearing of a magistrate or the sheriff of the county."

His sentence was afterwards mitigated on account of his health, and he was permitted to leave the country. He embarked for the West Indies, and is supposed to have perished at sea.

What had caused especial irritation in the case of Dr. Church, was the kind of warfare already mentioned, carried on along the coast by British cruisers, and notoriously by Captain Wallace. To check these maraudings, and to capture the enemy's transports laden with supplies, the provinces of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, fitted out two armed vessels each, at their own expense, without seeking the sanction or aid of Congress. Washington, also, on his own responsibility, ordered several to be equipped for like purpose, which were to be manned by

hardy mariners, and commanded by able sea captains, actually serving in the army. One of these vessels was despatched, as soon as ready, to cruise between Cape Ann and Cape Cod. Two others were fitted out with all haste, and sent to cruise in the waters of the St. Lawrence, to intercept two unarmed brigantines which Congress had been informed had sailed from England for Quebec, with ammunition and military stores. Among the sturdy little New England seaports, which had become obnoxious to punishment by resistance to nautical exactions, was Falmouth (now Portland), in Maine.

On the evening of the 11th October, Lieutenant Mowat, of the royal navy, appeared before it with several armed vessels, and sent a letter on shore, apprising the inhabitants that he was come to execute a just punishment on them for their "premeditated attacks on the legal prerogatives of the best of sovereigns." Two hours were given them, "to remove the human species out of the town," at the period of which, a red pendant hoisted at the main-top-gallant masthead, and a gun, would be the signal for destruction.

The letter brought a deputation of three persons on board. The lieutenant informed them verbally, that he had orders from Admiral Graves to set fire to all the seaport towns between Boston and Halifax: and he expected New York, at the present moment, was in ashes.

With much difficulty, and on the surrendering of some arms, the committee obtained a respite until nine o'clock the next morning, and the inhabitants employed the interval in removing their families and effects. The next morning the committee returned on board before nine o'clock. The lieutenant now offered to spare the town on certain conditions, which were refused. About half-past nine o'clock the red pendant was run up to the masthead, and the signal gun fired. Within five minutes several houses were in flames, from a discharge of carcasses and bomb-shells, which continued throughout the day. The inhabitants, "standing on the heights, were spectators of the conflagration, which reduced many of them to penury and despair." One hundred and thirty-nine dwelling-houses, and two hundred and twenty-eight stores, are said to have been burnt.[1] All

[1] Holmes's Annals, ii. 220.

the vessels in the harbour, likewise, were destroyed or carried away as prizes.

Having satisfied his sense of justice with respect to Falmouth, the gallant lieutenant left it a smoking ruin, and made sail, as was said, for Boston, to supply himself with more ammunition, having the intention to destroy Portsmouth also.[1]

The conflagration of Falmouth was as a bale-fire throughout the country. Lieutenant Mowat was said to have informed the committee at that place, that orders had come from England to burn all the seaport towns that would not lay down and deliver up their arms, and give hostages for their good behaviour.[2]

Washington himself supposed such to be the case. "The desolation and misery," writes he, "which ministerial vengeance had planned, in contempt of every principle of humanity, and so lately brought on the town of Falmouth, I know not how sufficiently to commiserate, nor can my compassion for the general suffering be conceived beyond the true measure of my feelings."

General Greene, too, in a letter to a friend, expresses himself with equal warmth. "O, could the Congress behold the distresses and wretched condition of the poor inhabitants driven from the seaport towns, it must, it would, kindle a blaze of indignation against the commissioned pirates and licensed robbers! * * * People begin heartily to wish a declaration of independence."[3]

General Sullivan was sent to Portsmouth, where there was a fortification of some strength, to give the inhabitants his advice and assistance in warding off the menaced blow. Newport also was put on the alert, and recommended to fortify itself. "I expect every hour," writes Washington, "to hear that Newport has shared the same fate of unhappy Falmouth."[4] Under the feeling roused by these reports, the General Court of Massachusetts, exercising a sovereign power, passed an Act for encouraging the fitting out of armed vessels to defend the sea-coast of America, and for erecting a court to try and condemn all vessels that should be found infesting the same. This Act, granting letters of

[1] Letter of P. Jones.
[2] Letter from Gen. Greene, to Gov. Cooke.
[3] Am. Archives, iii. 1145.
[4] Letter to the President of Congress.

marque and reprisal, anticipated any measure of the kind on the part of the General Government, and was pronounced by John Adams "one of the most important documents in history."[1]

The British Ministry have, in later days, been exculpated from the charge of issuing such a desolating order as that said to have been reported by Lieutenant Mowat. The orders under which that officer acted, we are told, emanated from General Gage and Admiral Graves. The former intended merely the annoyance and destruction of rebel shipping, whether on the coast or in the harbours to the eastward of Boston; the burning of the town is surmised to have been an additional thought of Admiral Graves. Naval officers have a passion for bombardments.

Whatever part General Gage may have had in this most ill-advised and discreditable measure, it was the last of his military government, and he did not remain long enough in the country to see it carried into effect. He sailed for England on the 10th of October. The tidings of the battle of Bunker's Hill had withered his laurels as a commander. Still he was not absolutely superseded, but called home, "in order," as it was considerately said, "to give his Majesty exact information of everything, and suggest such matters as his knowledge and experience of the service might enable him to furnish." During his absence Major-general Howe would act as commander-in-chief of the colonies on the Atlantic Ocean, and Major general Carleton of the British forces in Canada and on the frontiers. Gage fully expected to return and resume the command. In a letter written to the minister, Lord Dartmouth, the day before sailing, he urged the arrival, early in the spring, of reinforcements which had been ordered, anticipating great hazard at the opening of the campaign. In the mean time he trusted that two thousand troops, shortly expected from Ireland, would enable him "to distress the rebels by incursions along the coast," and "he hoped Portsmouth in New Hampshire would feel the weight of his Majesty's arms." "Poor Gage," writes Horace Walpole, "is to be the scapegoat for what was a reason against employing him—incapacity." He never returned to America.

[1] See Life of Gerry, 109.

On the 15th of October a committee from Congress arrived in camp, sent to hold a conference with Washington, and with delegates from the governments of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, on the subject of a new organization of the army. The committee consisted of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Lynch of Carolina, and Colonel Harrison of Virginia. It was just twenty years since Washington had met Franklin in Braddock's camp, aiding that unwary general by his sagacious counsels and prompt expedients. Franklin was regarded with especial deference in the camp at Cambridge. Greene, who had never met with him before, listened to him as to an oracle.

Washington was president of the board of conference, and Mr. Joseph Reed secretary. The committee brought an intimation from Congress that an attack upon Boston was much desired, if practicable.

Washington called a council of war of his generals on the subject: they were unanimously of opinion that an attack would not be prudent at present.

Another question now arose. An attack upon the British forces in Boston, whenever it should take place, might require a bombardment: Washington inquired of the delegates how far it might be pushed to the destruction of houses and property. They considered it a question of too much importance to be decided by them, and said it must be referred to Congress. But though they declined taking upon themselves the responsibility, the majority of them were strongly in favour of it; and expressed themselves so when the matter was discussed informally in camp. Two of the committee, Lynch and Harrison, as well as Judge Wales, delegate from Connecticut, when the possible effects of a bombardment were suggested at a dinner table, declared that they would be willing to see Boston in flames. Lee, who was present, observed that it was impossible to burn it unless they sent in men with bundles of straw to do it. "It could not be done with carcasses and red-hot shot. Isle Royal," he added, "in the river St. Lawrence, had been fired at for a long time in 1760, with a fine train of artillery, hot shot and carcasses, without effect."[1]

[1] Life of Dr. Belknap, p. 96. The doctor was present at the above-cited conversation.

The board of conference was repeatedly in session, for three or four days. The report of its deliberations rendered by the committee, produced a resolution of Congress that a new army of twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-two men and officers, should be formed, to be recruited as much as possible from the troops actually in service. Unfortunately the term for which they were to be enlisted was to be *but for one year*. It formed a precedent which became a recurring cause of embarrassment throughout the war.

Washington's secretary, Mr. Reed, had, after the close of the conference, signified to him his intention to return to Philadelphia, where his private concerns required his presence. His departure was deeply regretted. His fluent pen had been of great assistance to Washington in the despatch of his multifarious correspondence, and his judicious counsels and cordial sympathies had been still more appreciated by the commander-in-chief, amid the multiplied difficulties of his situation. On the departure of Mr. Reed, his place as secretary was temporarily supplied by Mr. Robert Harrison of Maryland, and subsequently by Colonel Mifflin; neither, however, attained to the affectionate confidence reposed in their predecessor.

We shall have occasion to quote the correspondence kept up between Washington and Reed, during the absence of the latter. The letters of the former are peculiarly interesting, as giving views of what was passing, not merely around him, but in the recesses of his own heart. No greater proof need be given of the rectitude of that heart, than the clearness and fulness with which, in these truthful documents, every thought and feeling is laid open.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Measures of General Howe—Desecration of Churches—Three Proclamations—Seizure of Tories—Want of Artillery—Henry Knox, the Artillerist—His Mission to Ticonderoga—Re-enlistment of Troops—Lack of Public Spirit—Comments of General Greene.

The measures which General Howe had adopted after taking command in Boston, rejoiced the royalists, seeming to justify their anticipations. He proceeded to strengthen

the works on Bunker's Hill and Boston Neck, and to clear away houses and throw up redoubts on eminences within the town. The patriot inhabitants were shocked by the desecration of the Old South Church, which for more than a hundred years had been a favourite place of worship, where some of the most eminent divines had officiated. The pulpit and pews were now removed, the floor was covered with earth, and the sacred edifice was converted into a riding-school for Burgoyne's light dragoons. To excuse its desecration, it was spoken of scoffingly as a "meeting-house, where sedition had often been preached."

The North Church, another "meeting-house," was entirely demolished and used for fuel. "Thus," says a chronicler of the day, "thus are our houses devoted to religious worship, profaned and destroyed by the subjects of his royal majesty."[1]

About the last of October Howe issued three proclamations. The first forbade all persons to leave Boston without his permission under pain of military execution; the second forbade any one, so permitted, to take with him more than five pounds sterling, under pain of forfeiting all the money found upon his person and being subject to fine and imprisonment; the third called upon the inhabitants to arm themselves for the preservation of order within the town; they to be commanded by officers of his appointment.

Washington had recently been incensed by the conflagration of Falmouth; the conduct of Governor Dunmore, who had proclaimed martial law in Virginia, and threatened ruin to the patriots, had added to his provocation; the measures of General Howe seemed of the same harsh character, and he determined to retaliate.

"Would it not be prudent," writes he to Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, "to seize those tories who have been, are, and we know will be active against us? Why should persons who are preying upon the vitals of their country, be suffered to stalk at large, whilst we know they will do us every mischief in their power?"

In this spirit he ordered General Sullivan, who was

[1] Thacher's Military Journal, p. 50.

fortifying Portsmouth, "to seize upon such persons as held commissions under the crown, and were acting as open and avowed enemies to their country, and hold them as hostages for the security of the town." Still he was moderate in his retaliation, and stopped short of private individuals. "For the present," said he, "I shall avoid giving the like order with regard to the *tories* of Portsmouth; but the day is not far off when they will meet with this, or a worse fate, if there is not a considerable reformation in their conduct."[1]

The season was fast approaching when the bay between the camp and Boston would be frozen over, and military operations might be conducted upon the ice. General Howe, if reinforced, would then very probably "endeavour to relieve himself from the disgraceful confinement in which the ministerial troops had been all summer." Washington felt the necessity, therefore, of guarding the camps wherever they were most assailable; and of throwing up batteries for the purpose. He had been embarrassed throughout the siege by the want of artillery and ordnance stores, but never more so than at the present moment. In this juncture, Mr. Henry Knox stepped forward, and offered to proceed to the frontier forts on Champlain in quest of a supply.

Knox was one of those providential characters which spring up in emergencies, as if they were formed by and for the occasion. A thriving bookseller in Boston, he had thrown up business to take up arms for the liberties of his country. He was one of the patriots who had fought on Bunker's Hill, since when he had aided in planning the defences of the camp before Boston. The aptness and talent here displayed by him as an artillerist, had recently induced Washington to recommend him to Congress for the command of the regiment of artillery in place of the veteran Gridley, who was considered by all the officers of the camp too old for active employment. Congress had not yet acted on that recommendation: in the mean time Washington availed himself of the offered services of Knox in the present instance. He was, accordingly, instructed to

[1] Letter to William Palfrey. Sparks, iii. 158.

examine into the state of the artillery in camp, and take an account of the cannon, mortars, shells, lead, and ammunition that were wanting. He was then to hasten to New York, procure and forward all that could be had there, and thence proceed to the head-quarters of General Schuyler, who was requested by letter to aid him in obtaining what further supplies of the kind were wanting from the forts at Ticonderoga, Crown Point, St. Johns, and even Quebec, should it be in the hands of the Americans. Knox set off on his errand with promptness and alacrity, and shortly afterwards the commission of colonel of the regiment of artillery which Washington had advised, was forwarded to him by Congress.

The re-enlistment of troops actually in service was now attempted, and proved a fruitful source of perplexity. In a letter to the President of Congress, Washington observes that half of the officers of the rank of captain were inclined to retire; and it was probable their example would influence their men. Of those who were disposed to remain, the officers of one colony were unwilling to mix in the same regiment with those of another. Many sent in their names, to serve in expectation of promotion; others stood aloof, to see what advantages they could make for themselves; while those who had declined sent in their names again to serve.[1] The difficulties were greater, if possible, with the soldiers than with the officers. They would not enlist unless they knew their colonel, lieutenant-colonel, and captain; Connecticut men being unwilling to serve under officers from Massachusetts, and Massachusetts men under officers from Rhode Island; so that it was necessary to appoint the officers first.

Twenty days later he again writes to the President of Congress: "I am sorry to be necessitated to mention to you the egregious want of public spirit which prevails here. Instead of pressing to be engaged in the cause of their country, which I vainly flattered myself would be the case, I find we are likely to be deserted in a most critical time. * * * Our situation is truly alarming, and of this General Howe is well apprised. No doubt when he is reinforced he will avail himself of the information."

[1] Washington to the President of Congress, Nov. 8.

In a letter to Reed he disburdened his heart more completely. "Such dearth of public spirit, and such want of virtue; such stock-jobbing, and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantage of one kind or another in this great change of military arrangement, I never saw before, and I pray God's mercy that I may never be witness to again. What will be the end of these manœuvres is beyond my scan. I tremble at the prospect. We have been till this time (Nov. 28) enlisting about three thousand five hundred men. To engage these, I have been obliged to allow furloughs as far as fifty men to a regiment, and the officers, I am persuaded, indulge many more. The Connecticut troops will not be prevailed upon to stay longer than their term, saving those who have enlisted for the next campaign, and are mostly on furlough; and such a mercenary spirit pervades the whole, that I should not be surprised at any disaster that may happen. * * * Could I have foreseen what I have experienced, and am likely to experience, no consideration upon earth should have induced me to accept this command."

No one drew closer to Washington in this time of his troubles and perplexities than General Greene. He had a real veneration for his character, and thought himself "happy in an opportunity to serve under so good a general." He grieved at Washington's annoyances, but attributed them in part to his being somewhat of a stranger in New England. "He has not had time," writes he, "to make himself acquainted with the genius of this people: they are naturally as brave and spirited as the peasantry of any other country; but you cannot expect veterans of a raw militia from only a few months' service. The common people are exceedingly avaricious; the genius of the people is commercial, from their long intercourse with trade. The sentiment of honour, the true characteristic of a soldier, has not yet got the better of interest. His Excellency has been taught to believe the people here a superior race of mortals; and finding them of the same temper and dispositions, passions and prejudices, virtues and vices of the common people of other governments, they sank in his esteem."[1]

[1] Greene to Dep. Gov. Ward. Am. Arch., Fourth Series, iii. 1145.

CHAPTER L.

Affairs in Canada—Capture of Fort Chamblee—Siege of St. Johns—Maclean and his Highlanders—Montgomery on the treatment of Ethan Allen—Repulse of Carleton—Capitulation of the Garrison of St. Johns—Generous Conduct of Montgomery—Maclean re-embarks for Quebec—Weary struggle of Arnold through the Wilderness—Defection of Colonel Enos—Arnold in the Valley of the Chaudiere—His arrival opposite Quebec—Surrender of Montreal—Escape of Carleton—Home Sickness of the American Troops.

Despatches from Schuyler, dated October 26th, gave Washington another chapter of the Canada expedition. Chamblee, an inferior fort, within five miles of St. Johns, had been taken by Majors Brown and Livingston at the head of fifty Americans and three hundred Canadians. A large quantity of gunpowder, and other military stores found there, was a seasonable supply to the army before St. Johns, and consoled General Montgomery for his disappointment in regard to the aid promised by Colonel Ethan Allen. He now pressed the siege of St. Johns with vigour. The garrison, cut off from supplies, were suffering from want of provisions; but the brave commander, Major Preston, still held out manfully, hoping speedy relief from General Carleton, who was assembling troops for that purpose at Montreal.

Carleton, it is true, had but about one hundred regulars, several hundred Canadians, and a number of Indians with him; but he calculated greatly on the co-operation of Colonel Maclean, a veteran Scot, brave and bitterly loyal, who had enlisted three hundred of his countrymen at Quebec, and formed them into a regiment called "The Royal Highland Emigrants." This doughty Highlander was to land at the mouth of the Sorel, where it empties into the St. Lawrence, and proceed along the former river to St. Johns, to join Carleton, who would repair thither by the way of Longueil.

In the meantime, Montgomery received accounts from various quarters that Colonel Ethan Allen and his men, captured in the ill-advised attack upon Montreal, were treated with cruel and unnecessary severity, being loaded

with irons; and that even the colonel himself was subjected to this "shocking indignity." Montgomery addressed a letter to Carleton on the subject, strong and decided in its purport, but written in the spirit of a courteous and high-minded gentleman, and ending with an expression of that sad feeling which gallant officers must often have experienced in this revolutionary conflict, on being brought into collision with former brothers in arms.

"Your character, sir," writes he, "induces me to hope I am ill informed. Nevertheless, the duty I owe the troops committed to my charge, lays me under the necessity of acquainting your Excellency, that, if you allow this conduct and persist in it, I shall, though with the most painful regret, execute with rigour the just and necessary law of retaliation upon the garrison of Chamblee, now in my possession, and upon all others who may hereafter fall into my hands. * * * * I shall expect your Excellency's answer in six days. Should the bearer not return in that time, I must interpret your silence into a declaration of a barbarous war. I cannot pass this opportunity without lamenting the melancholy and fatal necessity, which obliges the firmest friends of the constitution to oppose one of the most respectable officers of the crown."

While waiting for a reply, Montgomery pressed the siege of St. Johns, though thwarted continually by the want of subordination and discipline among his troops; hasty levies from various colonies, who, said he, "carry the spirit of freedom into the field, and think for themselves." Accustomed as he had been, in his former military experience, to the implicit obedience of European troops, the insubordination of these yeoman soldiery was intolerable to him. "Were I not afraid," writes he, "the example would be too generally followed, and that the public service might suffer, I would not stay an hour at the head of troops whose operations I cannot direct. I must say I have no hopes of success, unless from the garrison's wanting provisions."

He had advanced his lines and played from his batteries on two sides of the fort for some hours, when tidings brought by four prisoners, caused him to cease his fire.

General Carleton, on the 31st of September, had embarked his motley force at Montreal in thirty-four boats, to

cross the St. Lawrence, land at Longueil, and push on for St. Johns, where, as concerted, he was to be joined by Maclean and his Highlanders. As the boats approached the right bank of the river at Longueil, a terrible fire of artillery and musketry was unexpectedly opened upon them, and threw them into confusion. It was from Colonel Seth Warner's detachment of Green Mountain Boys and New Yorkers. Some of the boats were disabled, some were driven on shore on an island; Carleton retreated with the rest to Montreal, with some loss in killed and wounded. The Americans captured two Canadians and two Indians; and it was these prisoners who brought tidings to the camp of Carleton's signal repulse.

Aware that the garrison held out merely in expectation of the relief thus intercepted, Montgomery ceased his fire, and sent a flag by one of the Canadian prisoners, with a letter informing Major Preston of the event, and inviting a surrender to spare the effusion of blood.

Preston in reply, expressed a doubt of the truth of the report brought by the prisoners, but offered to surrender if not relieved in four days. The condition was refused, and the gallant major was obliged to capitulate. His garrison consisted of five hundred regulars and one hundred Canadians; among the latter were several of the provincial noblesse.

Montgomery treated Preston and his garrison with the courtesy inspired by their gallant resistance. He had been a British officer himself, and his old associations with the service, made him sympathise with the brave men whom the fortune of war had thrown into his hands. Perhaps, their high-bred and aristocratic tone contrasted favourably in his eyes, with the rough demeanour of the crude swordsmen with whom he had recently associated, and brought back the feelings of early days, when war with him was a gay profession, not a melancholy duty. According to capitulation, the baggage of both officers and men were secured to them, and each of the latter received a new suit of clothing from the captured stores. This caused a murmur among the American soldiery, many of whom were nearly naked, and the best but scantily provided. Even some of the officers were indignant that all the articles of

clothing had not been treated as lawful spoil. "I would not have sullied my own reputation, nor disgraced the Continental arms by such a breach of capitulation for the universe," said Montgomery. Having sent his prisoners up Lake Champlain to Ticonderoga, he prepared to proceed immediately to Montreal; requesting General Schuyler to forward all the men he could possibly spare.

The Royal Highland Emigrants, who were to have co-operated with General Carleton, met with no better fortune than that commander. Maclean landed at the mouth of the Sorel, and added to his force by recruiting a number of Canadians in the neighbourhood, at the point of the bayonet. He was in full march for St. John's when he was encountered by Majors Brown and Livingston with their party, fresh from the capture of Chamblee, and reinforced by a number of Green Mountain Boys. These pressed him back to the mouth of the Sorel, where, hearing of the repulse of Carleton, and being deserted by his Canadian recruits, he embarked the residue of his troops, and set off down the St. Lawrence to Quebec. The Americans now took post at the mouth of the Sorel, where they erected batteries so as to command the St. Lawrence, and prevent the descent of any armed vessels from Montreal.

Thus closed another chapter of the invasion of Canada. "Not a word of Arnold yet," said Montgomery, in his last despatch. "I have sent two expresses to him lately, one by an Indian who promised to return with expedition. The instant I have any news of him, I will acquaint you by express."

We will anticipate his express, by giving the reader the purport of letters received by Washington direct from Arnold himself, bringing forward the collateral branch of this eventful enterprise.

The transportation of troops and effects across the carrying-place between the Kennebec and Dead Rivers, had been a work of severe toil and difficulty to Arnold and his men, but performed with admirable spirit. There were ponds and streams full of trout and salmon, which furnished them with fresh provisions. Launching their boats on the sluggish waters of the Dead River, they navigated it in divisions, as before, to the foot of snow-crowned

mountains; a part of the great granite chain which extends from south-west to north-east throughout our continent. Here, while Arnold and the first division were encamped to repose themselves, heavy rains set in, and they came near being swept away by sudden torrents from the mountains. Several of their boats were overturned, much of their provisions were lost, the sick list increased, and the good spirits which had hitherto sustained them began to give way. They were on scanty allowance, with a prospect of harder times, for there were still twelve or fifteen days of wilderness before them, where no supplies were to be had. A council of war was now held, in which it was determined to send back the sick and disabled, who were mere incumbrances. Arnold, accordingly, wrote to the commanders of the other divisions, to press on with as many of their men as they could furnish with provisions for fifteen days, and to send the rest back to a place on the route called Norridgewock. This order was misunderstood, or misinterpreted by Colonel Enos, who commanded the rear division; he gave all the provisions he could spare to Colonel Greene of the third division, retaining merely enough to supply his own corps of three hundred men on their way back to Norridgewock, whither he immediately returned.

Letters from Arnold and Enos apprised Washington of this grievous flaw in the enterprise. He regarded it, however, as usual, with a hopeful eye. "Notwithstanding this great defection," said he, "I do not despair of Colonel Arnold's success. He will have, in all probability, many more difficulties to encounter, than if he had been a fortnight sooner; as it is likely that Governor Carleton will, with what forces he can collect after the surrender of the rest of Canada, throw himself into Quebec, and there make his last effort."[1]

Washington was not mistaken in the confidence he had placed in the energy of Arnold. Though the latter found his petty force greatly reduced by the retrograde move of Enos and his party, and although snow and ice rendered his march still more bleak among the mountains, he kept

[1] Washington to the President of Congress, Nov. 19th.

on with unflinching spirit until he arrived at the ridge which divides the streams of New England and Canada. Here, at Lake Megantic, the source of the Chaudiere, he met an emissary whom he had sent in advance to ascertain the feelings of the *habitans*, or French yeomanry, in the fertile valley of that stream. His report being favourable, Arnold shared out among the different companies the scanty provisions which remained, directing them to make the best of their way for the Chaudiere settlements; while he, with a light foraging party, would push rapidly ahead, to procure and send back supplies.

He accordingly embarked with his little party in five bateaux and a birch canoe, and launched forth without a guide on the swift current of the Chaudiere. It was little better than a mountain torrent, full of rocks and rapids. Three of their boats were dashed to pieces, the cargoes lost, and the crews saved with difficulty. At one time, the whole party came near being precipitated over a cataract, where all might have perished: at length they reached Sertigan, the first French settlement, where they were cordially received. Here Arnold bought provisions, which he sent back by the Canadians and Indians to his troops. The latter were in a state of starvation. Some had not tasted food for eight-and-forty hours; others had cooked two dogs, followers of the camp; and others had boiled their moccasins, cartouch-boxes, and other articles of leather, in the hope of rendering them eatable.

Arnold halted for a short time in the hospitable valley of the Chaudiere, to give his troops repose, and distributed among the inhabitants the printed manifesto with which he had been furnished by Washington. Here he was joined by about forty Norridgewock Indians. On the 9th of November, the little army emerged from the woods at Point Levi, on the St. Lawrence, opposite to Quebec. A letter, written by an inhabitant of that place, speaks of their sudden apparition.

"There are about 500 Provincials arrived at Point Levi, opposite to the town, by the way of Chaudiere across the woods. Surely a miracle must have been wrought in their favour. It is an undertaking above the common race of men in this debauched age. They have travelled through

woods and bogs, and over precipices, for the space of one hundred and twenty miles, attended with every inconvenience and difficulty, to be surmounted only by men of indefatigable zeal and industry."

Leaving Arnold in full sight of Quebec, which, after his long struggle through the wilderness, must have appeared like a land of promise, we turn to narrate the events of the upper expedition into Canada, of which the letters of Schuyler kept Washington faithfully informed.

Montgomery appeared before Montreal on the 12th of November. General Carleton had embarked with his little garrison, and several of the civil officers of the place, on board of a flotilla of ten or eleven small vessels, and made sail in the night, with a favourable breeze, carrying away with him the powder and other important stores. The town capitulated, of course; and Montgomery took quiet possession. His urbanity and kindness soon won the good will of the inhabitants, both English and French, and made the Canadians sensible that he really came to secure their rights, not to molest them. Intercepted letters acquainted him with Arnold's arrival in the neighbourhood of Quebec, and the great alarm of "the king's friends," who expected to be besieged: "which, with the blessing of God, they shall be," said Montgomery, "if the severe season holds off, and I can prevail on the troops to accompany me."

His great immediate object, was the capture of Carleton; which would form a triumphal close to the enterprise, and might decide the fate of Canada. The flotilla, in which the general was embarked, had made repeated attempts to escape down the St. Lawrence; but had as often been driven back by the batteries thrown up by the Americans at the mouth of the Sorel. It now lay anchored about fifteen miles above that river; and Montgomery prepared to attack it with bateaux and light artillery, so as to force it down upon the batteries.

Carleton saw his imminent peril. Disguising himself as a Canadian voyager, he set off on a dark night accompanied by six peasants, in a boat with muffled oars, which he assisted to pull; slipped quietly and silently past all the batteries and guard-boats, and effected his escape to Three

Rivers, where he embarked in a vessel for Quebec. After his departure the flotilla surrendered, and all those who had taken refuge on board were made prisoners of war. Among them was General Prescott, late commander of Montreal.

Montgomery now placed garrisons in Montreal, St. Johns, and Chamblee, and made final preparations for descending the St. Lawrence, and co-operating with Arnold against Quebec. To his disappointment and deep chagrin, he found but a handful of his troops disposed to accompany him. Some pleaded ill health; the term of enlistment of many had expired, and they were bent on returning home; and others, who had no such excuses to make, became exceedingly turbulent, and indeed mutinous. Nothing but a sense of public duty, and gratitude to Congress for an unsought commission, had induced Montgomery to engage in the service: wearied by the continual vexations which beset it, he avowed, in a letter to Schuyler, his determination to retire as soon as the intended expedition against Quebec was finished. "Will not your health permit you to reside at Montreal this winter?" writes he to Schuyler; "I must go home, if I walk by the side of the lake. I am weary of power, and totally want that patience and temper so requisite for such a command." Much of the insubordination of the troops he attributed to the want of tact and cultivation in their officers; who had been suddenly advanced from inferior stations and coarse employments. "An affair happened yesterday," writes he to Schuyler on the 24th of November, "which had very near sent me home. A number of officers presumed to remonstrate against the indulgence I had given some of the king's troops. Such an insult I could not bear, and immediately resigned. To-day they qualified it by such an apology, as put it in my power to resume the command." In the same spirit he writes: "I wish some method could be fallen upon for engaging *gentlemen* to serve. A point of honour and more knowledge of the world, to be found in that class of men, would greatly reform discipline, and render the troops much more tractable."

The troops which had given Montgomery so much an-

noyance, and refused to continue with him in Canada, soon began to arrive at Ticonderoga. Schuyler, in a letter to Congress, gives a half-querulous, half-humorous account of their conduct. "About three hundred of the troops raised in Connecticut, passed here within a few days. An unhappy home-sickness prevails. These all came down as invalids, not one willing to re-engage for the winter's service; and, unable to get any work done by them, I discharged them *en groupe*. Of all the specifics ever invented for *any*, there is none so efficacious as a discharge for *this* prevailing disorder. No sooner was it administered but it perfected the cure of nine out of ten; who, refusing to wait for boats to go by the way of Lake George, slung their heavy packs, crossed the lake at this place, and undertook a march of two hundred miles with the greatest goodwill and alacrity."

This home-sickness in rustic soldiers, after a rough campaign, was natural enough, and seems only to have provoked the testy and subacid humour of Schuyler; but other instances of conduct roused his indignation.

A schooner and tow-galley arrived at Crown Point, with upwards of a hundred persons. They were destitute of provisions; none were to be had at the Point, and the ice prevented them from penetrating to Ticonderoga. In starving condition they sent an express to General Schuyler, imploring relief. He immediately ordered three captains of General Wooster's regiment, with a considerable body of men in bateaux, to "attempt a relief for the unhappy sufferers." To his surprise and disgust, they manifested the most unwillingness to comply, and made a variety of excuses, which he spurned at as frivolous, and as evincing the greatest want of humanity. He expressed himself to that effect the next day, in a general order, adding the following stinging words:—"The general, therefore, not daring to trust a matter of so much importance to men of so little feeling, has ordered Lieutenant Riker, of Colonel Holmes's regiment, to make the attempt. He received the order with the alacrity becoming a gentleman, an officer, and a Christian."

This high-minded rebuke, given in so public a manner, rankled in the breasts of those whose conduct had merited

it, and insured to Schuyler that persevering hostility with which mean minds revenge the exposure of their meanness.

CHAPTER LI.

Washington's anticipations of Success at Quebec—His Eulogium of Arnold—Schuyler and Montgomery talk of resigning—Expostulations of Washington—Their effect—Schuyler's Conduct to a Captive Foe.

We have endeavoured to compress into a succinct account various events of the invasion of Canada, furnished to Washington by letters from Schuyler and Arnold. The tidings of the capture of Montreal had given him the liveliest satisfaction. He now looked forward to equal success in the expedition against Quebec. In a letter to Schuyler, he passed a high eulogium on Arnold. "The merit of this gentleman is certainly great," writes he, "and I heartily wish that fortune may distinguish him as one of her favourites. I am convinced that he will do everything that prudence and valour shall suggest to add to the success of our arms, and for reducing Quebec to our possession. Should he not be able to accomplish so desirable a work with the forces he has, I flatter myself that it will be effected when General Montgomery joins him, and our conquest of Canada will be complete."

Certain passages of Schuyler's letters, however, gave him deep concern, wherein that general complained of the embarrassments and annoyances he had experienced from the insubordination of the army. "Habituated to order," said he, "I cannot without pain see that disregard of discipline, confusion, and inattention, which reign so generally in this quarter, and I am determined to retire. Of this resolution I have advised Congress."

He had indeed done so. In communicating to the President of Congress the complaints of General Montgomery and his intention to retire, "my sentiments," said he, "exactly coincide with his. I shall, with him, do everything in my power to put a finishing stroke to the campaign, and make the best arrangement in my power, in

order to insure success to the next. This done, I must beg leave to retire."

Congress, however, was too well aware of his value readily to dispense with his services. His letter produced a prompt resolution expressive of their high sense of his attention and perseverance, "which merited the thanks of the United Colonies." He had alleged his impaired health —they regretted the injuries it had sustained in the service, but begged he would not insist on a measure "which would deprive America of the benefits of his zeal and abilities, and rob him of the honour of completing the work he had so happily begun."

What, however, produced a greater effect upon Schuyler than any encomium or entreaty on the part of Congress, were the expostulations of Washington, inspired by strong friendship and kindred sympathies. "I am exceedingly sorry," writes the latter, "to find you so much embarrassed by the disregard of discipline, confusion, and want of order among the troops, as to have occasioned you to mention to Congress an inclination to retire. I know that your complaints are too well founded, but would willingly hope that nothing will induce you to quit the service. * * * * I have met with difficulties of the same sort, and such as I never expected, but they must be borne with. The cause we are engaged in is so just and righteous, that we must try to rise superior to every obstacle in its support; and, therefore, I beg that you will not think of resigning, unless you have carried your application to Congress too far to recede."

And in another letter he makes a still stronger appeal to his patriotism. "I am sorry that you and General Montgomery incline to quit the service. Let me ask you, sir, when is the time for brave men to exert themselves in the cause of liberty and their country, if this is not? Should any difficulties that they may have to encounter at this important crisis deter them? God knows there is not a difficulty that you both very justly complain of that I have not in an eminent degree experienced, that I am not every day experiencing; but we must bear up against them, and make the best of mankind as they are, since we cannot have them as we wish. Let me, therefore, conjure

you, and Mr. Montgomery, to lay aside such thoughts—as thoughts injurious to yourselves, and extremely so to your country, which calls aloud for gentlemen of your ability."

This noble appeal went straight to the heart of Schuyler, and brought out a magnanimous reply. "I do not hesitate," writes he, "to answer my dear general's question in the affirmative, by declaring that now or never is the time for every virtuous American to exert himself in the cause of liberty and his country; and that it is become a duty cheerfully to sacrifice the sweets of domestic felicity to attain the honest and glorious end America has in view."

In the same letter he reveals in confidence the true cause of his wish to retire from an official station; it was the annoyance he had suffered throughout the campaign from sectional prejudice and jealousy. "I could point out particular persons of rank in the army," writes he, "who have frequently declared that the general commanding in this quarter ought to be of the colony from whence the majority of the troops came. But it is not from opinions or principles of individuals that I have drawn the following conclusion, that troops from the colony of Connecticut will not bear with a general from another colony; it is from the daily and common conversation of all ranks of people from that colony, both in and out of the army, and I assure you that I sincerely lament that people of so much public virtue should be actuated by such an unbecoming jealousy founded on such a narrow principle." Having made this declaration, he adds, "Although I frankly own that I feel a resentment, yet I shall continue to sacrifice it to a nobler object, the weal of that country in which I have drawn the breath of life, resolved ever to seek, with unwearied assiduity, for opportunities to fulfil my duty to it."

It is with pride we have quoted so frequently the correspondence of these two champions of our Revolution, as it lays open their hearts, and shows the lofty patriotism by which they were animated.

A letter from John Adams to General Thomas alleges, as one cause of Schuyler's unpopularity with the eastern troops, the "politeness" shown by him to Canadian and

British prisoners; which "enabled them and their ministerial friends to impose upon him."[1]

The "politeness," in fact, was that noble courtesy which a high-minded soldier extends towards a captive foe. If his courtesy was imposed upon, it only proved that, incapable of double-dealing himself, he suspected it not in others. All generous natures are liable to imposition, their warm impulses being too quick for selfish caution. It is the cold, the calculating, and the mean, whose distrustful wariness is never taken in.

CHAPTER LII.

Difficulties in filling up the Army—The Connecticut Troops persist in going home—Their reception there—Timely arrival of spoils in the Camp—Putnam and the Prize Mortar—A Maraud by Americans—Rebuked by Washington—Correspondence of Washington with General Howe about the treatment of Ethan Allen—Fraternal zeal of Levi Allen—Treatment of General Prescott—Preparations to bombard Boston—Battery at Lechmere's Point—Prayer of Putnam for Powder.

The forming even of the skeleton of an army under the new regulations had been a work of infinite difficulty—to fill it up was still more difficult. The first burst of revolutionary zeal had passed away; enthusiasm had been chilled by the inaction and monotony of a long encampment; an encampment, moreover, destitute of those comforts which, in experienced warfare, are provided by a well-regulated commissariat. The troops had suffered privations of every kind, want of fuel, clothing, provisions. They looked forward with dismay to the rigours of winter, and longed for their rustic homes and their family fire-sides.

Apprehending that some of them would incline to go home when the time of their enlistment expired, Washington summoned the general officers at head-quarters, and invited a delegation of the General Court to be present, to adopt measures for the defence and support of the lines. The result of their deliberations was an order that three thousand of the minute men and militia of Massachusetts,

[1] Letter-Book of Gen. Thomas. MS.

and two thousand from New Hampshire, should be at Cambridge by the 10th of December, to relieve the Connecticut regiments, and supply the deficiency that would be caused by their departure, and by the absence of others on furlough.

With this arrangement the Connecticut troops were made acquainted, and, as the time of most of them would not be out before the 10th, they were ordered to remain in camp until relieved. Their officers assured Washington that he need apprehend no defection on the part of their men—they would not leave the lines. The officers themselves were probably mistaken in their opinion of their men, for, on the 1st of December, many of the latter, some of whom belonged to Putnam's regiment, resolved to go home immediately. Efforts were made to prevent them, but in vain; several carried off with them their arms and ammunition. Washington sent a list of their names to Governor Trumbull. "I submit it to your judgment," writes he, "whether an example should not be made of these men, who have deserted the cause of their country at this critical juncture, when the enemy are receiving reinforcements?"

We anticipate the reply of Governor Trumbull, received several days subsequently. "The late extraordinary and reprehensible conduct of some of the troops of this colony," writes he, "impresses me, and the minds of many of our people, with great surprise and indignation, since the treatment they met with, and the order and request made to them were so reasonable, and apparently necessary for the defence of our common cause, and safety of our rights and privileges, for which they freely engaged."

We will here add, that the homeward-bound warriors seem to have run the gauntlet along the road; for their conduct on quitting the army drew upon them such indignation that they could hardly get anything to eat on their journey, and when they arrived at home they met with such a reception (to the credit of the Connecticut women be it recorded), that many were soon disposed to return again to the camp.[1]

[1] See Letter of Gen. Greene to Samuel Ward. Am. Arch. 4th Series, vol. iv.

On the very day after the departure homeward of these troops, and while it was feared their example would be contagious, a long, lumbering train of waggons, laden with ordnance and military stores, and decorated with flags, came wheeling into the camp, escorted by continental troops and country militia. They were part of the cargo of a large brigantine laden with munitions of war, captured and sent in to Cape Ann by the schooner 'Lee,' Captain Manly, one of the cruisers sent out by Washington. "Such universal joy ran through the whole camp," writes an officer, "as if each one grasped a victory in his own hands."

Besides the ordnance captured, there were two thousand stand of arms, one hundred thousand flints, thirty thousand round shot, and thirty-two tons of musket-balls.

"Surely nothing," writes Washington, "ever came more *apropos*."

It was indeed a cheering incident, and was eagerly turned to account. Among the ordnance was a huge brass mortar of a new construction, weighing near three thousand pounds. It was considered a glorious trophy, and there was a resolve to christen it. Mifflin, Washington's secretary, suggested the name. The mortar was fixed in a bed, old Putnam mounted it, dashed on it a bottle of rum, and gave it the name of Congress. The shouts which rent the air were heard in Boston. When the meaning of them was explained to the British, they observed, that "should their expected reinforcements arrive in time, the rebels would pay dear in the spring for all their petty triumphs."

With Washington this transient gleam of nautical success was soon overshadowed by the conduct of the cruisers he had sent to the St. Lawrence. Failing to intercept the brigantines, the object of their cruise, they landed on the island of St. Johns, plundered the house of the governor and several private dwellings, and brought off three of the principal inhabitants prisoners, one of whom, Mr. Callbeck, was president of the council, and acted as governor.

These gentlemen made a memorial to Washington of this scandalous maraud. He instantly ordered the restoration of the effects which had been pillaged; of his conduct

towards the gentlemen personally, we may judge by the following note addressed to him by Mr. Callbeck :—

"I should ill deserve the generous treatment which your excellency has been pleased to show me had I not the gratitude to acknowledge so great a favour. I cannot ascribe any part of it to my own merit, but must impute the whole to the philanthropy and humane disposition that so truly characterize General Washington. Be so obliging, therefore, as to accept the only return in my power, that of my most grateful thanks."[1]

Shortly after the foregoing occurrence, information was received of the indignities which had been heaped upon Colonel Ethan Allen, when captured at Montreal by General Prescott, who, himself, was now a prisoner in the hands of the Americans. It touched Washington on a point on which he was most sensitive and tenacious, the treatment of American officers when captured; and produced the following letter from him to General Howe :—

"Sir,—We have just been informed of a circumstance which, were it not so well authenticated, I should scarcely think credible. It is, that Colonel Allen, who with his small party, was defeated and made prisoner near Montreal, has been treated without regard to decency, humanity, or the rules of war; that he has been thrown into irons, and suffers all the hardships inflicted upon common felons.

"I think it my duty, sir, to demand, and do expect from you, an eclaircissement on this subject. At the same time, I flatter myself, from the character which Mr. Howe bears, as a man of honour, gentleman, and soldier, that my demand will meet with his approbation. I must take the liberty, also, of informing you that I shall consider your silence as a confirmation of the report, and further assuring you, that whatever treatment Colonel Allen receives, whatever fate he undergoes, such exactly shall be the treatment and fate of Brigadier Prescott, now in our hands. The law of retaliation is not only justifiable in the eyes of God and man, but absolutely a duty, which, in our present circumstances, we owe to our relations, friends, and fellow-citizens.

[1] Sparks. Washington's Writings, vol. iii. p. 194.

"Permit me to add, sir, that we have all here the highest regard and reverence for your great personal qualities and attainments, and the Americans in general esteem it as not the least of their misfortunes, that the name of Howe, a name so dear to them, should appear at the head of the catalogue of the instruments employed by a wicked ministry for their destruction."

General Howe felt acutely the sorrowful reproach in the latter part of the letter. It was a reiteration of what had already been expressed by Congress; in the present instance it produced irritation, if we may judge from the reply:—

"Sir,—In answer to your letter, I am to acquaint you that my command does not extend to Canada. Not having any accounts wherein the name of Allen is mentioned, I cannot give you the smallest satisfaction upon the subject of your letter. But trusting Major-general Carleton's conduct will never incur censure upon any occasion, I am to conclude in the instance of your inquiry, that he has not forfeited his past pretensions to decency and humanity.

"It is with regret, considering the character you have always maintained among your friends, as a gentleman of the strictest honour and delicacy, that I find cause to resent a sentence in the conclusion of your letter, big with invective against my superiors, and insulting to myself, which should obstruct any further intercourse between us. I am, sir, &c."

In transmitting a copy of his letter to the President of Congress, Washington observed; "My reason for pointing out Brigadier-general Prescott as the object who is to suffer for Mr. Allen's fate, is, that by letters from General Schuyler and copies of letters from General Montgomery to Schuyler, I am given to understand that Prescott is the cause of Allen's sufferings. I thought it best to be decisive on the occasion, as did the generals whom I consulted thereon."

For the sake of continuity we will anticipate a few facts connected with the story of Ethan Allen. Within a few weeks after the preceding correspondence, Washington received a letter from Levi Allen, a brother to the colonel,

and of like enterprising and enthusiastic character. It was dated from Salisbury in Connecticut; and enclosed affidavits of the harsh treatment his brother had experienced, and of his being confined on board of the Gaspee, "with a bar of iron fixed to one of his legs and iron to his hands." Levi was bent upon effecting his deliverance, and the mode proposed was in unison with the bold but wild schemes of the colonel. We quote his crude, but characteristic letter:—

"Have some thoughts of going to England *incognito*, after my brother, but am not positively certain he is sent there, though believe he is. Beg your excellency will favour me with a line, and acquaint me if any intelligence concerning him, and if your excellency please, your opinion of the expediency of going after him, and whether your excellency would think proper to advance any money for that purpose, as my brother was a man blessed with more fortitude than fortune. Your excellency may think, at first thought, I can do nothing by going to England; I feel as if I could do a great deal, by raising a mob in London, bribing the jailer, or by getting into some servile employment with the jailer, and over-faithfulness make myself master of the key, or at least be able to lay my hand on it some night. I beg your excellency will countenance my going; can muster more than one hundred pounds, my own property; shall regard spending that no more than one copper. Your excellency must know Allen was not only a brother, but a real friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

In a postscript he adds, "Cannot live without going to England, if my brother is sent there."

In reply, Washington intimated a belief that the colonel had been sent to England, but discountenanced Levi's wild project of following him thither; as there was no probability of its success, and he would be running himself into danger without a prospect of rendering service to his brother.

The measure of retaliation mentioned in Washington's letter to Howe, was actually meted out by Congress on the arrival of General Prescott in Philadelphia. He was ordered into close confinement in the jail; though not put in irons. He was subsequently released from confinement, on account

of ill health, and was treated by some Philadelphia families with unmerited hospitality.[1]

At the time of the foregoing correspondence with Howe, Washington was earnestly occupied preparing works for the bombardment of Boston, should that measure be resolved upon by Congress. General Putnam, in the preceding month, had taken possession in the night of Cobble Hill without molestation from the enemy, though a commanding eminence; and in two days had constructed a work, which, from its strength, was named Putnam's impregnable fortress.

He was now engaged on another work on Lechmere Point, to be connected with the works at Cobble Hill by a bridge thrown across Willis's Creek, and a covered way. Lechmere Point is immediately opposite the north part of Boston; and the 'Scarborough' ship-of-war was anchored near it. Putnam availed himself of a dark and foggy day (Dec. 17), to commence operations, and broke ground with four hundred men, at ten o'clock in the morning, on a hill at the Point. "The mist," says a contemporary account, "was so great as to prevent the enemy from discovering what he was about until near twelve o'clock, when it cleared up, and opened to their view our whole party at the Point, and another at the causeway throwing a bridge over the creek. The 'Scarborough,' anchored off the Point, poured in a broadside. The enemy from Boston threw shells. The garrison at Cobble Hill returned fire. Our men were obliged to decamp from the Point, but the work was resumed by the brave old general at night."

On the next morning, a cannonade from Cobble Hill

[1] Thomas Walker, a merchant of Montreal, who, accused of traitorous dealings with the Americans, had been thrown into prison during Prescott's sway, and his country-house burnt down, undertook a journey to Philadelphia in the depth of winter, when he understood the general was a captive there, trusting to obtain satisfaction for his ill-treatment. To his great surprise, he found Mr. Prescott lodged in the best tavern of the place, walking or riding at large through Philadelphia and Bucks Counties, feasting with gentlemen of the first rank in the province, and keeping a levee for the reception of the grandees. In consequence of which unaccountable phenomena, and the little prospect of his obtaining any adequate redress in the present unsettled state of public affairs, Mr. Walker has returned to Montreal.—Am. Archives, Fourth Series, vol. iv., 1178.

obliged the 'Scarborough' to weigh anchor, and drop down below the ferry; and General Heath was detached with a party of men to carry on the work which Putnam had commenced. The enemy resumed their fire. Sentinels were placed to give notice of a shot or shell; the men would crouch down or dodge it, and continue on with their work. The fire ceased in the afternoon, and Washington visited the hill accompanied by several officers, and inspected the progress of the work. It was to consist of two redoubts, on one of which was to be a mortar battery. There was, as yet, a deficiency of ordnance; but the prize mortar was to be mounted which Putnam had recently christened, "The Congress." From the spirit with which the work was carried on, Washington trusted that it would soon be completed, "and then," said he, "if we have powder to sport with, and Congress gives the word, Boston can be bombarded from this point."

For several days the labour at the works was continued, the two redoubts were thrown up, and a covered way was constructed leading down to the bridge. All this was done notwithstanding the continual fire of the enemy. The letter of a British officer gives his idea of the efficiency of the work.

"The rebels for some days past have been erecting a battery on Phipps' Farm. The new constructed mortar taken on board the ordnance brig, we are told, will be mounted upon it, and we expect a warm salute from the shells, another part of that vessel's cargo; so that, in spite of her capture, we are likely to be complimented with the contents of her lading."

"If the rebels can complete their battery, this town will be on fire about our ears a few hours after; all our buildings being of wood, or a mixture of brick and woodwork. Had the rebels erected their battery on the other side of the town, at Dorchester, the admiral and all his booms would have made the first blaze, and the burning of the town would have followed. If we cannot destroy the rebel battery by our guns, we must march out and take it sword in hand."

Putnam anticipated great effects from this work, and especially from his grand mortar, "The Congress." Shells

there were in abundance for a bombardment; the only thing wanting was a supply of powder. One of the officers, writing of the unusual mildness of the winter, observes: "Everything thaws here except old Put. He is still as hard as ever, crying out for powder—powder—powder. Ye gods, give us powder!"

CHAPTER LIII.

Mount Vernon in Danger—Mrs. Washington invited to the Camp—Lund Washington, the General's Agent—Terms on which he serves—Instructed to keep up the hospitality of the house—Journey of Mrs. Washington to Camp—Her Equipage and Liveries—Arrival at Camp—Domestic Affairs at Head-quarters—Gaieties in Camp—A Brawl between Round-jackets and Rifle-shirts.

Amid the various concerns of the war, and the multiplied perplexities of the camp, the thoughts of Washington continually reverted to his home on the banks of the Potomac. A constant correspondence was kept up between him and his agent, Mr. Lund Washington, who had charge of his various estates. The general gave clear and minute directions as to their management, and the agent rendered as clear and minute returns of everything that had been done in consequence.

According to recent accounts, Mount Vernon had been considered in danger. Lord Dunmore was exercising martial law in the Ancient Dominion, and it was feared that the favourite abode of the "rebel commander-in-chief" would be marked out for hostility, and that the enemy might land from their ships in the Potomac, and lay it waste. Washington's brother, John Augustine, had entreated Mrs. Washington to leave it. The people of Loudoun had advised her to seek refuge beyond the Blue Ridge, and had offered to send a guard to escort her. She had declined the offer, not considering herself in danger. Lund Washington was equally free from apprehensions on the subject. "Lord Dunmore," writes he, "will hardly himself venture up this river, nor do I believe he will send on that errand. You may depend I will be watchful, and upon the least alarm persuade her to move."

Though alive to everything concerning Mount Vernon,

Washington agreed with them in deeming it in no present danger of molestation by the enemy. Still he felt for the loneliness of Mrs. Washington's situation, heightened as it must be by anxiety on his own account. On taking command of the army, he had held out a prospect to her, that he would rejoin her at home in the autumn; there was now a probability of his being detained before Boston all winter. He wrote to her, therefore, by express, in November, inviting her to join him at the camp. He at the same time wrote to Lund Washington, engaging his continued services as an agent. This person, though bearing the same name, and probably of the same stock, does not appear to have been in any near degree of relationship. Washington's letter to him gives a picture of his domestic policy:—

"I will engage for the year coming, and the year following, if these troubles and my absence continue, that your wages shall be standing and certain at the highest amount that any one year's crop has produced you yet. I do not offer this as any temptation to induce you to go on more cheerfully in prosecuting those schemes of mine. I should do injustice to you were I not to acknowledge, that your conduct has ever appeared to me above everything sordid; but I offer it in consideration of the great charge you have upon your hands, and my entire dependence upon your fidelity and industry.

"It is the greatest, indeed it is the only comfortable reflection I enjoy on this score, that my business is in the hands of a person concerning whose integrity I have not a doubt, and on whose care I can rely. Were it not for this, I should feel very unhappy on account of the situation of my affairs. But I am persuaded you will do for me as you would for yourself."

The following were his noble directions concerning Mount Vernon:—

"Let the hospitality of the house with respect to the poor be kept up. Let no one go hungry away. If any of this kind of people should be in want of corn, supply their necessities, provided it does not encourage them to idleness; and I have no objection to your giving my money in charity to the amount of forty or fifty pounds a year, when you think it well bestowed. What I mean by having no

objection is, that it is my desire it should be done. You are to consider that neither myself nor wife is now in the way to do those good offices."

Mrs. Washington came on with her own carriage and horses, accompanied by her son, Mr. Custis, and his wife. She travelled by very easy stages, partly on account of the badness of the roads, partly out of regard to the horses, of which Washington was always very careful, and which were generally remarkable for beauty and excellence. Escorts and guards of honour attended her from place to place, and she was detained some time at Philadelphia, by the devoted attention of the inhabitants.

Her arrival at Cambridge was a glad event in the army. Incidental mention is made of the equipage in which she appeared there. A chariot and four, with black postilions in scarlet and white liveries. It has been suggested that this was an English style of equipage, derived from the Fairfaxes; but in truth it was a style still prevalent at that day in Virginia.

It would appear that dinner invitations to head-quarters, were becoming matters of pride and solicitude. "I am much obliged to you," writes Washington to Reed, "for the hints respecting the jealousies which you say are gone abroad. I cannot charge myself with incivility, or what, in my opinion, is tantamount, ceremonious civility to gentlemen of this colony; but if such my conduct appears, I will endeavour at a reformation; as I can assure you, my dear Reed, that I wish to walk in such a line as will give most general satisfaction. You know that it was my wish at first to invite a certain number of the gentlemen of this colony every day to dinner, but unintentionally we somehow or other missed of it. If this has given rise to the jealousy, I can only say that I am very sorry for it; at the same time I add, that it was rather owing to inattention, or more properly, too much attention to other matters, which caused me to neglect it."

And in another letter:—

"My constant attention to the great and perplexing objects which continually arise to my view, absorbs all lesser considerations; and, indeed, scarcely allows me to reflect that there is such a body as the General Court of

this colony, but when I am reminded of it by a committee; nor can I, upon recollection, discover in what instance I have been inattentive to, or slighted them. They could not surely conceive that there was a propriety in unbosoming the secrets of the army to them. that it was necessary to ask their opinion in throwing up an intrenchment or forming a battalion. It must be, therefore, what I before hinted to you; and how to remedy it I hardly know, as I am acquainted with few of the members, never go out of my own lines, nor see any of them in them."

The presence of Mrs. Washington soon relieved the general from this kind of perplexity. She presided at head-quarters with mingled dignity and affability. We have an anecdote or two of the internal affairs of head-quarters, furnished by the descendant of one who was an occasional inmate there.

Washington had prayers morning and evening, and was regular in his attendance at the church in which he was a communicant. On one occasion, for want of a clergyman, the episcopal service was read by Colonel William Palfrey, one of Washington's aides-de-camp; who substituted a prayer of his own composition in place of the one formerly offered up for the king.

Not long after her arrival in camp, Mrs. Washington claimed to keep twelfth-night in due style as the anniversary of her wedding. "The general," says the same informant, "was somewhat thoughtful, and said he was afraid he must refuse it." His objections were overcome, and twelfth-night and the wedding anniversary were duly celebrated.

There seems to have been more conviviality at the quarters of some of the other generals; their time and minds were less intensely engrossed by anxious cares, having only their individual departments to attend to. Adjutant-general Mifflin's house appears to have been a gay one. "He was a man of education, ready apprehension, and brilliancy," says Graydon; "had spent some time in Europe, particularly in France, and was very easy of access, with the manners of genteel life, though occasionally evolving those of the Quaker."[1]

[1] Graydon's Memoirs, p. 154.

Mrs. Adams gives an account of an evening party at his house. "I was very politely entertained and noticed by the generals," writes she, "more especially General Lee, who was very urgent for me to tarry in town, and dine with him and the ladies present at Hobgoblin Hall; but I excused myself. The general determined that I should not only be acquainted with him, but with his companions too; and therefore placed a chair before me, into which he ordered Mr. Spada (his dog) to mount, and present his paw to me for a better acquaintance. I could not do otherwise than accept it."[1]

John Adams, likewise, gives us a picture of festivities at head-quarters, where he was a visitant on the recess of Congress.

"I dined at Colonel Mifflin's with the general (Washington) and lady, and a vast collection of other company, among whom were six or seven sachems and warriors of the French Caughnawaga Indians, with their wives and children. A savage feast they made of it; yet were very polite in the Indian style. I was introduced to them by the general as one of the grand council at Philadelphia, which made them prick up their ears. They came and shook hands with me."[2]

While giving these familiar scenes and occurrences at the camp, we are tempted to subjoin one furnished from the manuscript memoir of an eye-witness. A large party of Virginia riflemen, who had recently arrived in camp, were strolling about Cambridge, and viewing the collegiate buildings, now turned into barracks. Their half-Indian equipments, and fringed and ruffled hunting garbs, provoked the merriment of some troops from Marblehead, chiefly fishermen and sailors, who thought nothing equal to the round jacket and trousers. A bantering ensued between them. There was snow upon the ground, and snowballs began to fly when jokes were wanting. The parties waxed warm with the contest. They closed and came to blows; both sides were reinforced, and in a little

[1] Letters of Mr. Adams, vol. i. p. 85.

[2] Adams' Letters, vol. ii. p. 80. Adams adds, that they made him "low bows and scrapes"—a kind of homage never paid by an Indian warrior.

while at least a thousand were at fisticuffs, and there was a tumult in the camp worthy of the days of Homer. "At this juncture," writes our informant, "Washington made his appearance, whether by accident or design I never knew. I saw none of his aides with him; his black servant just behind him mounted. He threw the bridle of his own horse into his servant's hands, sprang from his seat, rushed into the thickest of the melée, seized two tall brawny riflemen by the throat, keeping them at arm's-length, talking to and shaking them."

As they were from his own province, he may have felt peculiarly responsible for their good conduct; they were engaged, too, in one of those sectional brawls which were his especial abhorrence; his reprimand must, therefore, have been a vehement one. He was commanding in his serenest moments, but irresistible in his bursts of indignation. On the present occasion, we are told, his appearance and strong-handed rebuke put an instant end to the tumult. The combatants dispersed in all directions, and in less than three minutes none remained on the ground but the two he had collared.

The veteran who records this exercise of military authority, seems at a loss which most to admire, the simplicity of the process or the vigour with which it was administered. "Here," writes he, "bloodshed, imprisonments, trials by court-martial, revengeful feelings between the different corps of the army, were happily prevented by the physical and mental energies of a single person, and the only damage resulting from the fierce encounter was, a few torn hunting frocks and round jackets." [1]

[1] From memoranda written at an advanced age, by the late Hon. Israel Trask; who, when but ten years old, was in the camp at Cambridge with his father, who was a lieutenant.

CHAPTER LIV.

Affairs in Canada—Arnold at Point Levi—Quebec reinforced—Crossing of the St. Lawrence—Landing in Wolfe's Cove—Arnold on the Heights of Abraham—Cautious Counsel—Quebec aroused—The Invaders baffled—Withdraw to Point Aux Trembles—Booming of Cannon—Carleton at Quebec—Letter of Washington to Arnold.

We again turn from the siege of Boston to the invasion of Canada, which at that time shared the anxious thoughts of Washington. His last accounts of the movements of Arnold, left him at Point Levi, opposite to Quebec. Something brilliant from that daring officer was anticipated. It was his intention to cross the river immediately. Had he done so, he might have carried the town by a *coup de main;* for terror as well as disaffection prevailed among the inhabitants. At Point Levi, however, he was brought to a stand; not a boat was to be found there. Letters which he had despatched some days previously, by two Indians, to Generals Schuyler and Montgomery, had been carried by his faithless messengers, to Caramhe, the lieutenant-governor, who, thus apprised of the impending danger, had caused all the boats of Point Levi to be either removed or destroyed.

Arnold was not a man to be disheartened by difficulties. With great exertions he procured about forty birch canoes from the Canadians and Indians, with forty of the latter to navigate them; but stormy winds arose, and for some days the river was too boisterous for such frail craft. In the mean time the garrison at Quebec was gaining strength. Recruits arrived from Nova Scotia. The veteran Maclean, too, who had been driven from the mouth of the Sorel by the detachment under Brown and Livingston, arrived down the river with his corps of Royal Highland Emigrants, and threw himself into the place. The 'Lizard' frigate, the 'Hornet' sloop-of-war, and two armed schooners were stationed in the river, and guard-boats patrolled at night. The prospect of a successful attack upon the place was growing desperate.

On the 13th of November, Arnold received intelligence that Montgomery had captured St. Johns. He was in-

stantly roused to emulation. His men, too, were inspirited by the news. The wind had abated: he determined to cross the river that very night. At a late hour in the evening he embarked with the first division, principally riflemen. The river was wide; the current rapid; the birch canoes, easy to be upset, required skilful management. By four o'clock in the morning, a large part of his force had crossed without being perceived, and landed about a mile-and-a-half above Cape Diamond, at Wolfe's Cove, so called from being the landing-place of that gallant commander.

Just then a guard-boat, belonging to the 'Lizard,' came slowly along shore and discovered them. They hailed it and ordered it to land. Not complying, it was fired into, and three men were killed. The boat instantly pulled for the frigate, giving vociferous alarm.

Without waiting the arrival of the residue of his men, for whom the canoes had been despatched, Arnold led those who had landed to the foot of the cragged defile, once scaled by the intrepid Wolfe, and scrambled up it in all haste. By daylight he had planted his daring flag on the far-famed heights of Abraham.

Here the main difficulty stared him in the face. A strong line of walls and bastions traversed the promontory from one of its precipitous sides to the other; enclosing the upper and lower towns. On the right the great bastion of Cape Diamond crowned the rocky height of that name. On the left was the bastion of La Potasse, close by the gate of St. Johns opening upon the barracks; the gate where Wolfe's antagonist, the gallant Montcalm, received his death-wound.

A council of war was now held. Arnold, who had some knowledge of the place, was for dashing forward at once and storming the gate of St. Johns. Had they done so, they might have been successful. The gate was open and unguarded. Through some blunder and delay, a message from the commander of the 'Lizard' to the lieutenant-governor had not yet been delivered, and no alarm had reached the fortress.

The formidable aspect of the place, however, awed Arnold's associates in council. They considered that their whole force was but between seven and eight hundred men;

that nearly one-third of their fire-arms had been rendered useless, and much of their ammunition damaged in their march through the wilderness; they had no artillery, and the fortress looked too strong to be carried by a *coup de main*. Cautious counsel is often fatal to a daring enterprise. While the council of war deliberated, the favourable moment passed away. The lieutenant-governor received the tardy message. He hastily assembled the merchants, officers of militia, and captains of merchant vessels. All promised to stand by him: he had strong distrust, however, of the French part of the population and the Canadian militia; his main reliance was on Colonel Maclean and his Royal Highland Emigrants.

The din of arms now resounded through the streets. The cry was up—"The enemy are on the Heights of Abraham! The gate of St. Johns is open!" There was an attempt to shut it. The keys were not to be found. It was hastily secured by ropes and handspikes, and the walls looking upon the heights were soon manned by the military, and thronged by the populace.

Arnold paraded his men within a hundred yards of the walls, and caused them to give three hearty cheers; hoping to excite a revolt in the place, or to provoke the scanty garrison to a sally. There were a few scattered cheerings in return; but the taunting bravado failed to produce a sortie; the governor dared not venture beyond the walls with part of his garrison, having too little confidence in the loyalty of those who would remain behind. There was some firing on the part of the Americans, but merely as an additional taunt; they were too far off for their musketry to have effect. A large cannon on the ramparts was brought to bear on them, and matches were procured from the 'Lizard,' with which to fire it off. A few shots obliged the Americans to retire and encamp.

In the evening, Arnold sent a flag, demanding in the name of the United Colonies the surrender of the place. Some of the disaffected and the faint-hearted were inclined to open the gates; but were held in check by the mastiff loyalty of Maclean. The veteran guarded the gate with his Highlanders; forbade all communication with the besiegers, and fired upon their flag as an ensign of rebellion.

Several days elapsed. Arnold's flags of truce were repeatedly insulted, but he saw the futility of resenting it, and attacking the place with his present means. The inhabitants gradually recovered from their alarm, and armed themselves to defend their property. The sailors and marines proved a valuable addition to the garrison, which now really meditated a sortie.

Arnold received information of all this from friends within the walls; he heard about the same time of the capture of Montreal, and that General Carleton, having escaped from that place, was on his way down to Quebec. He thought at present, therefore, to draw off on the 19th to *Point aux Trembles* (Aspen-tree Point), twenty miles above Quebec, there to await the arrival of General Montgomery with troops and artillery. As his little army wended its way along the high bank of the river towards its destined encampment, a vessel passed below, which had just touched at Point aux Trembles. On board of it was General Carleton, hurrying on to Quebec.

It was not long before the distant booming of artillery told of his arrival at his post, where he resumed a stern command. He was unpopular among the inhabitants; even the British merchants and other men of business, were offended by the coldness of his manners, and his confining his intimacy to the military and the Canadian noblesse. He was aware of his unpopularity, and looked round him with distrust; his first measure was to turn out of the place all suspected persons, and all who refused to aid in its defence. This caused a great "trooping out of town," but what was lost in numbers was gained in strength. With the loyally disposed who remained, he busied himself in improving the defences.

Of the constant anxiety, yet enduring hope, with which Washington watched this hazardous enterprise, we have evidence in his various letters. To Arnold, when at Point Levi, baffled in the expectation of finding the means of making a dash upon Quebec, he writes:—"It is not in the power of any man to command success, but you have done more, you have deserved it; and before this time (Dec. 5th), I hope you will have met with the laurels, which are due to your toils, in the possession of Quebec.

"I have no doubt but a junction of your detachment with the army under General Montgomery, is effected before this; if so, you will put yourself under his command, and will, I am persuaded, give him all the assistance in your power to finish the glorious work you have begun."

CHAPTER LV.

Lord Dunmore—His Plan of harassing Virginia—Lee's Policy respecting Tory Governors and Placemen—Rhode Island harassed by Wallace and his Cruisers, and infested by Tories—Lee sent to its Relief—His Vigorous Measures—The Army disbanding—Washington's Perplexities—Sympathy of General Greene—His Loyalty in Time of Trouble—The Crisis—Cheering News from Canada—Gloomy Opening of the New Year—News from Colonel Knox.

In the month of December a vessel had been captured, bearing supplies from Lord Dunmore, to the army at Boston. A letter on board, from his lordship to General Howe, invited him to transfer the war to the southern colonies; or, at all events, to send reinforcements there, intimating at the same time his plan of proclaiming liberty to indentured servants, negroes, and others appertaining to rebels, and inviting them to join his majesty's troops. In a word—to inflict upon Virginia the horrors of a servile war.

"If this man is not crushed before spring," writes Washington, "he will become the most formidable enemy America has. His strength will increase as a snowball. * * * Motives of resentment actuate his conduct to a degree equal to the destruction of the colony."

General Lee took the occasion to set forth his own system of policy, which was particularly rigid wherever men in authority and Tories were concerned. It was the old grudge against ministers and their adherents set on edge.

"Had my opinion been thought worthy of attention," would he say, "Lord Dunmore would have been disarmed of his teeth and claws." He would have seized Tryon, too, "and all his Tories at New York," and, having struck the stroke, would have applied to Congress for approbation.

"I propose the following measures," would he add: "To seize every governor, government man, placeman, Tory, and enemy to liberty on the continent, to confiscate their estates, or at least lay them under heavy contributions for the public. Their persons should be secured, in some of the interior towns, as hostages for the treatment of those of our party whom the fortune of war shall throw into their hands; they should be allowed a reasonable pension out of their fortunes for their maintenance."[1]

Such was the policy advocated by Lee in his letters and conversation, and he soon had an opportunity of carrying it partly into operation. Rhode Island had for some time past been domineered over by Captain Wallace, of the royal navy, who had stationed himself at Newport with an armed vessel, and obliged the place to furnish him with supplies. Latterly he had landed in Conanicut Island, opposite to Newport, with a number of sailors and marines, plundered and burnt houses, and driven off cattle for the supply of the army. In his exactions and maraudings he was said to have received countenance from the Tory part of the inhabitants. It was now reported that a naval armament was coming from Boston against the island. In this emergency, the governor (Cooke) wrote to Washington, requesting military aid, and an efficient officer to put the island in a state of defence, suggesting the name of General Lee for the purpose.

Lee undertook the task with alacrity. "I sincerely wish," said Washington, "he may be able to do it with effect, as that place, in its present state, is an asylum for such as are disaffected to American liberty."

Lee set out for Rhode Island with his guard and a party of riflemen, and at Providence was joined by the cadet company of that place, and a number of minute-men. Preceded by these, he entered the town of Newport on Christmas day in military style. While there, he summoned before him a number of persons who had supplied the enemy; some according to a convention originally made between Wallace and the authorities; others, as it was suspected, through Tory feelings. All were obliged

[1] Lee to Rich. Henry Lee. Am. Archives, 4th Series, iv. 248.

by Lee to take a test oath of his own devising, by which they "religiously swore that they would neither directly, nor indirectly, assist the wicked instruments of ministerial tyranny and villany, commonly called the king's troops and navy, by furnishing them with provisions and refreshments." They swore, moreover, to "denounce all traitors before the public authority, and to take arms in defence of American liberty, whenever required by Congress or the provincial authority." Two custom-house officers, and another person, who refused to take the oath, were put under guard and sent to Providence. Having laid out works, and given directions for fortifications, Lee returned to camp after an absence of ten days. Some of his proceedings were considered too high-handed, and were disapproved by Congress. Lee made light of legislative censures. "One must not be trammelled by laws in war time," said he; "in a revolution all means are legal."

Washington approved of his measures. "I have seen General Lee since his expedition," writes he, "and hope Rhode Island will derive some advantage from it. I am told that Captain Wallace's ships have been supplied for some time by the town of Newport, on certain conditions stipulated between him and the committee. * * * I know not what pernicious consequences may result from a precedent of this sort. Other places circumstanced as Newport is, may follow the example, and by that means their whole fleet and army will be furnished with what it highly concerns us to keep from them. * * * Vigorous regulations, and such as at another time would appear extraordinary, are now become absolutely necessary for preserving our country against the strides of tyranny, making against it."[1]

December had been throughout a month of severe trial to Washington; during which he saw his army dropping away piecemeal before his eyes. Homeward every face was turned as soon as the term of enlistment was at an end. Scarce could the disbanding troops be kept a few days in camp until militia could be procured to supply their place. Washington made repeated and animated appeals to their

[1] Washington to Gov. Cooke. Sparks, iii. 227.

patriotism: they were almost unheeded. He caused popular and patriotic songs to be sung about the camp. They passed by like the idle wind. Home! home! home! throbbed in every heart. "The desire of retiring into a chimney-corner," says Washington, reproachfully, "seized the troops as soon as their terms expired."

Can we wonder at it? They were for the most part yeomanry, unused to military restraint, and suffering all the hardships of a starveling camp, almost within sight of the smoke of their own firesides.

Greene, throughout this trying month, was continually by Washington's side. His letters, expressing the same cares and apprehensions, and occasionally in the same language with those of the commander-in-chief, show how completely he was in his councils. He could well sympathise with him in his solicitudes. Some of his own Rhode Island troops were with Arnold in his Canada expedition. Others encamped on Prospect Hill, and whose order and discipline had been his pride, were evincing the prevalent disposition to disband. "They seem to be so sick of this way of life, and so homesick," writes he, "that I fear the greater part of the best troops from our colony will soon go home." To provide against such a contingency, he strengthened his encampment, so that, "if the soldiery should not engage as cheerfully as he expected, he might defend it with a less number."[1]

Still he was buoyant and cheerful; frequently on his white horse about Prospect Hill, haranguing his men, and endeavouring to keep them in good humour. "This is no time for disgusting the soldiery," would he say, "when their aid is so essential to the preservation of the rights of human nature and the liberties of America."

He wore the same cheery aspect to the commander-in-chief; or rather he partook of his own hopeful spirit. "I expect," would he say, "the army, notwithstanding all the difficulties we meet with, will be full in about six weeks."

It was this loyalty in time of trouble; this buoyancy under depression, this thorough patriotism, which won for him the entire confidence of Washington.

[1] Greene to Henry Ward.

The thirty-first of December arrived, the crisis of the army; for with that month expired the last of the old terms of enlistment. "We never have been so weak," writes Greene, "as we shall be to-morrow, when we dismiss the old troops." On this day Washington received cheering intelligence from Canada. A junction had taken place, a month previously, between Arnold and Montgomery at Point aux Trembles. They were about two thousand strong, and were making every preparation for attacking Quebec. Carleton was said to have with him but about twelve hundred men, the majority of whom were sailors. It was thought that the French would give up Quebec, if they could get the same conditions that were granted to the inhabitants of Montreal.[1]

Thus the year closed upon Washington with a ray of light from Canada, while all was doubt around him.

On the following morning (January 1st, 1776), his army did not amount to ten thousand men, and was composed of but half-filled regiments. Even in raising this inadequate force, it had been necessary to indulge many of the men with furloughs, that they might visit their families and friends. The expedients resorted to in equipping the army, show the prevailing lack of arms. Those soldiers who retired from service, were obliged to leave their weapons for their successors; receiving their appraised value. Those who enlisted, were required to bring a gun, or were charged a dollar for the use of one during the campaign. He who brought a blanket was allowed two dollars. It was impossible to furnish uniforms; the troops, therefore, presented a motley appearance, in garments of divers cuts and colours; the price of each man's garb being deducted from his pay.

The detachments of militia from the neighbouring provinces which replaced the disbanding troops, remained but for brief periods; so that, in despite of every effort, the lines were often but feebly manned, and might easily have been forced.

The anxiety of Washington, in this critical state of the army, may be judged from his correspondence with Reed.

[1] Letter of Washington to the President of Congress, Dec. 31.

"It is easier to conceive than to describe the situation of my mind for some time past, and my feelings under our present circumstances," writes he on the 4th of January. "Search the volumes of history through, and I much question whether a case similar to ours is to be found; namely, to maintain a post against the power of the British troops for six months together, without powder, and then to have one army disbanded and another raised within the same distance (musket-shot) of a reinforced enemy. What may be the issue of the last manœuvre, time only can unfold. I wish this month were well over our head. * * * We are now left with a good deal less than half-raised regiments, and about five thousand militia, who only stand engaged to the middle of this month; when, according to custom, they will depart, let the necessity of their stay be ever so urgent. Thus, for more than two months past, I have scarcely emerged from one difficulty before I have been plunged in another. How it will end, God, in his great goodness, will direct. I am thankful for his protection to this time. We are told that we shall soon get the army completed; but I have been told so many things which have never come to pass, that I distrust everything."

In a subsequent letter to Mr. Reed he reverts to the subject, and pours forth his feelings with confiding frankness. What can be more touching than the picture he draws of himself and his lonely vigils about his sleeping camp? "The reflection on my situation and that of this army produces many an unhappy hour, when all around me are wrapped in sleep. Few people know the predicament we are in on a thousand accounts; fewer still will believe, if any disaster happens to these lines, from what cause it flows. I have often thought how much happier I should have been, if, instead of accepting the command under such circumstances, I had taken my musket on my shoulder and entered the ranks; or, if I could have justified the measure to posterity and my own conscience, had retired to the back country and lived in a wigwam. If I shall be able to rise superior to these, and many other difficulties, which might be enumerated, I shall most religiously believe that the finger of Providence is in it, to blind the eyes of our enemies; for surely if we get well through this month,

it must be for want of their knowing the disadvantages which we labour under."

Recurring to the project of an attack upon Boston, which he had reluctantly abandoned in deference to the adverse opinions of a council of war—"Could I have foreseen the difficulties which have come upon us; could I have known that such a backwardness would have been discovered among the old soldiers to the service, all the generals upon earth should not have convinced me of the propriety of delaying an attack upon Boston till this time. When it can now be attempted, I will not undertake to say; but thus much I will answer for, that no opportunity can present itself earlier than my wishes."

In the midst of his discouragements, Washington received letters from Knox, showing the spirit and energy with which he was executing his mission, in quest of cannon and ordnance stores. He had struggled manfully and successfully with all kinds of difficulties from the advanced season, and head winds, in getting them from Ticonderoga to the head of Lake George. "Three days ago," writes he, on the 17th of December, "it was very uncertain whether we could get them over until next spring; but now, please God, they shall go. I have made forty-two exceedingly strong sleds, and have provided eighty yoke of oxen to drag them as far as Springfield, where I shall get fresh cattle to take them to camp."

It was thus that hardships and emergencies were bringing out the merits of the self-made soldiers of the Revolution, and showing their commander-in-chief on whom he might rely.

CHAPTER LVI.

Military Preparations in Boston—A Secret Expedition—Its Object—Lee's Plan for the Security of New York Opinion of Adams on the Subject—Instructions to Lee—Transactions of Lee in Connecticut—Lee's Policy in regard to the Tories Uneasiness in New York—Letter of the Committee of Safety to Lee—His Reply—His Opinion of the People of Connecticut—Of the Hysterical Letter from the New York Congress.

EARLY in the month of January there was a great stir of preparation in Boston harbour. A fleet of transports were

taking in supplies, and making arrangements for the embarkation of troops. Bomb-ketches and flat-bottomed boats were getting ready for sea, as were two sloops-of-war, which were to convey the armament. Its destination was kept secret, but was confidently surmised by Washington.

In the preceding month of October, a letter had been laid before Congress, written by some person in London of high credibility, and revealing a secret plan of operations said to have been sent out by ministers to the commanders in Boston. The following is the purport:—Possession was to be gained of New York and Albany, through the assistance of Governor Tryon, on whose influence with the Tory part of the population much reliance was placed. These cities were to be very strongly garrisoned. All who did not join the king's forces were to be declared rebels. The Hudson River, and the East River or Sound, were to be commanded by a number of small men-of-war and cutters, stationed in different parts, so as wholly to cut off all communication by water between New York and the provinces to the northward of it; and between New York and Albany, except for the king's service; and to prevent, also, all communication between the city of New York and the provinces of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and those to the southward of them. "By these means," said the letter, "the administration and their friends fancy they shall soon either starve out or retake the garrisons of Crown Point and Ticonderoga, and open and maintain a safe intercourse and correspondence between Quebec, Albany, and New York, and thereby offer the fairest opportunity to their soldiery and the Canadians, in conjunction with the Indians to be procured by Guy Johnson, to make continual irruptions into New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, and so distract and divide the Provincial forces, as to render it easy for the British army at Boston to defeat them, break the spirits of the Massachusetts people, depopulate their country, and compel an absolute subjection to Great Britain."*

It was added that a lord, high in the American department, had been very particular in his inquiries about the

* Am. Archives, 4th Series, iii. 1281.

Hudson River; what-sized vessels could get to Albany; and whether, if batteries were erected in the Highlands, they would not control the navigation of the river, and prevent vessels from going up and down.

This information had already excited solicitude respecting the Hudson, and led to measures for its protection. It was now surmised that the expedition preparing to sail from Boston, and which was to be conducted by Sir Henry Clinton, might be destined to seize upon New York. How was the apprehended blow to be parried? General Lee, who was just returned from his energetic visit to Rhode Island, offered his advice and services in the matter. In a letter to Washington, he urged him to act at once, and on his own responsibility, without awaiting the tardy and doubtful sanction of Congress, for which, in military matters, Lee had but small regard.

"New York must be secured," writes he, "but it will never, I am afraid, be secured by due order of the Congress, for obvious reasons. They find themselves awkwardly situated on this head. You must step in to their relief. I am sensible no man can be spared from the lines under present circumstances; but I would propose that you should detach me into Connecticut, and lend your name for collecting a body of volunteers. I am assured that I shall find no difficulty in assembling a sufficient number for the purposes wanted. This body, in conjunction (if there should appear occasion to summon them) with the Jersey regiment under the command of Lord Stirling, now at Elizabethtown, will effect the security of New York, and the expulsion or suppression of that dangerous banditti of Tories, who have appeared on Long Island, with the professed intention of acting against the authority of Congress. Not to crush these serpents before their rattles are grown would be ruinous.

"This manœuvre, I not only think prudent and right, but absolutely necessary to our salvation; and if it meets, as I ardently hope it will, with your approbation, the sooner it is entered upon the better; the delay of a single day may be fatal."

Washington, while he approved of Lee's military suggestions, was cautious in exercising the extraordinary powers

so recently vested in him, and fearful of transcending them. John Adams was at that time in the vicinity of the camp, and he asked his opinion as to the practicability and expediency of the plan, and whether it "might not be regarded as beyond his line."

Adams, resolute of spirit, thought the enterprise might easily be accomplished by the friends of liberty in New York, in connection with the Connecticut people, "who are very ready," said he "upon such occasions."

As to the expediency, he urged the vast importance, in the progress of this war, of the city and province of New York, and the Hudson River, being the *nexus* of the northern and southern colonies, a kind of key to the whole continent, as it is a passage to Canada, to the Great Lakes, and to all the Indian nations. No effort to secure it ought to be omitted.

That it was within the limits of Washington's command, he considered perfectly clear, he being "vested with full power and authority, to act as he should think for the good and welfare of the service."

If there was a body of people on Long Island, armed to oppose the American system of defence, and furnishing supplies to the British army and navy, they were invading American liberty as much as those besieged in Boston.

If, in the city of New York, a body of Tories were waiting only for a force to protect them, to declare themselves on the side of the enemy, it was high time that city was secured.[1]

Thus fortified, as it were, by congressional sanction, through one of its most important members, who pronounced New York as much within his command as Massachusetts; he gave Lee authority to carry out his plans. He was to raise volunteers in Connecticut; march at their head to New York; call in military aid from New Jersey; put the city and the posts on the Hudson, in a posture of security against surprise; disarm all persons on Long Island and elsewhere, inimical to the views of Congress, or secure them in some other manner if necessary; and seize

[1] Adams to Washington, Corr. of Rev., i. 113.

upon all medicines, shirts and blankets, and send them on for the use of the American army.

Lee departed on his mission on the 8th of January. On the 16th, he was at New Haven, railing at the indecision of Congress. They had ordered the enlistment of troops for the security of New York. A Connecticut regiment, under Colonel Waterbury, had been raised, equipped, and on the point of embarking for Oyster Bay, on Long Island, to attack the Tories, who were to be attacked on the other side by Lord Stirling, "when suddenly," says Lee, "Colonel Waterbury received an order to disband his regiment; and the Tories are to remain unmolested till they are joined by the king's assassins."

Trumbull, the governor of Connecticut, however, "like a man of sense and spirit," had ordered the regiment to be re-assembled, and Lee trusted it would soon be ready to march with him. "I shall send immediately," said he, "an express to the Congress, informing them of my situation, and at the same time conjuring them not to suffer the accursed Provincial Congress of New York to defeat measures so absolutely necessary to salvation."

Lee's letter to the President of Congress showed that the instructions dictated by the moderate and considerate spirit of Washington were not strong enough, on some points, to suit his stern military notions. The scheme, simply of disarming the Tories, seemed to him totally ineffectual; it would only embitter their minds, and add virus to their venom. They could, and would, always be supplied with fresh arms by the enemy. That of seizing the most dangerous, would, from its vagueness, be attended with some bad consequences, and could answer no good one. "The plan of explaining to these deluded people the justice of the American cause is certainly generous and humane," observed he, "but I am afraid will be fruitless. They are so riveted in their opinions, that I am persuaded, should an angel descend from heaven with his golden trumpet, and ring in their ears that their conduct was criminal, he would be disregarded."

Lee's notion of the policy proper in the present case was, to disarm the disaffected of all classes, supplying our own troops with the arms thus seized; to appraise their estates,

and oblige them to deposit at least one-half the value with the Continental Congress, as a security for good behaviour: to administer the strongest oath that could be devised, that they would act offensively and defensively in support of the common rights; and, finally, to transfer all such as should prove refractory, to some place in the interior, where they would not be dangerous.

The people of New York, at all times very excitable, were thrown into a panic on hearing that Lee was in Connecticut, on his way to take military possession of the city. They apprehended his appearance there would provoke an attack from the ships in the harbour. Some, who thought the war about to be brought to their own doors, packed up their effects, and made off into the country with their wives and children. Others beleagured the committee of safety with entreaties against the deprecated protection of General Lee. The committee, through Pierre Van Cortlandt, their chairman, addressed a letter to Lee, inquiring into the motives of his coming with an army to New York, and stating the incapacity of the city to act hostilely against the ships of war in port, from deficiency in powder and a want of military works. For these and other reasons, they urged the impropriety of provoking hostilities for the present, and the necessity of "saving appearances," with the ships of war, till at least the month of March, when they hoped to be able to face their enemies with some countenance.

"We, therefore," continued the letter, "ardently wish to remain in peace for a little time, and doubt not we have assigned sufficient reasons for avoiding at present a dilemma in which the entrance of a large body of troops into the city will almost certainly involve us. Should you have such an entrance in design, we beg at least the troops may halt on the western confines of Connecticut, till we have been honoured by you with such an explanation on this important subject, as you may conceive your duty may permit you to enter upon with us, the grounds of which, you may easily see, ought to be kept an entire secret."

Lee, in reply, dated Stamford, January 23rd, disclaimed all intention of commencing actual hostilities against the men-of-war in the harbour; his instructions from the com-

mander-in-chief being solely to prevent the enemy from taking post in the city, or lodging themselves on Long Island. Some subordinate purposes were likewise to be executed, which were much more proper to be communicated by word of mouth than by writing. In compliance with the wishes of the committee, he promised to carry with him into the town just troops enough to secure it against any present designs of the enemy, leaving his main force on the western border of Connecticut. "I give you my word," added he, "that no active service is proposed, as you seem to apprehend. If the ships of war are quiet, I shall be quiet; but I declare solemnly, that if they make a pretext of my presence to fire on the town, the first house set on flames by their guns shall be the funeral pile of some of their best friends."

In a letter to Washington, written on the following day, he says of his recruiting success in Connecticut, "I find the people throughout this province more alive and zealous than my most sanguine expectations. I believe I might have collected two thousand volunteers. I take only four companies with me, and Waterbury's regiment. * * * These Connecticutians are, if possible, more eager to go out of their country than they are to return home, when they have been absent for any considerable time."

Speaking of the people of New York, and the letter from their Provincial Congress, which he encloses: "The Whigs," says he, "I mean the stout ones, are, it is said, very desirous that a body of troops should march and be stationed in the city; the timid ones are averse, merely from the spirit of procrastination, which is the characteristic of timidity. The letter from the Provincial Congress, you will observe, breathes the very essence of this spirit; it is wofully hysterical."

By-the-by, the threat contained in Lee's reply about a "funeral pile," coming from a soldier of his mettle, was not calculated to soothe the hysterical feelings of the committee of safety. How he conducted himself on his arrival in the city we shall relate in a future chapter.

CHAPTER LVII.

Montgomery before Quebec—His Plan of Operations—A Summons to Surrender—A Flag insulted—The Town besieged—Plan of an Escalade—Attack on the Lower Town—Montgomery in the Advance—His Death—Retreat of Colonel Campbell—Attack by Arnold—Defence of the Lower Town—Arnold wounded—Retreat of the Americans—Gallant resolve of Arnold.

From amid surrounding perplexities, Washington still turned a hopeful eye to Canada. He expected daily to receive tidings that Montgomery and Arnold were within the walls of Quebec, and he had even written to the former to forward as much as could be spared of the large quantities of arms, blankets, clothing, and other military stores, said to be deposited there; the army before Boston being in great need of such supplies.

On the 18th of January came despatches to him from General Schuyler, containing withering tidings. The following is the purport. Montgomery, on the 2nd of December, the day after his arrival at Point aux Trembles, set off in face of a driving snow-storm for Quebec, and arrived before it on the 5th. The works, from their great extent, appeared to him incapable of being defended by the actual garrison: made up, as he said, of "Maclean's banditti," the sailors from the frigates and other vessels, together with the citizens obliged to take up arms, most of whom were impatient of the fatigues of a siege, and wished to see matters accommodated amicably. "I propose," added he, "amusing Mr. Carleton with a formal attack, erecting batteries, &c., but mean to assault the works, I believe towards the lower town, which is the weakest part."

According to his own account, his whole force did not exceed nine hundred effective men, three hundred of whom he had brought with him; the rest he found with Colonel Arnold. The latter he pronounced an exceeding fine corps, inured to fatigue, and well accustomed to cannon shot, having served at Cambridge. "There is a style of discipline amongst them," adds he, "much superior to what I have been used to see in this campaign. He, himself (Arnold), is active, intelligent, and enterprising. Fortune often baffles the sanguine expectations of poor mortals.

I am not intoxicated with her favours, but I do think there is a fair prospect of success."[1]

On the day of his arrival he sent a flag with a summons to surrender. It was fired upon, and obliged to retire. Exasperated at this outrage, which, it is thought, was committed by the veteran Maclean, Montgomery wrote an indignant, reproachful, and even menacing letter to Carleton, reiterating the demand, magnifying the number of his troops, and warning him against the consequences of an assault. Finding it was rejected from the walls, it was conveyed in by a woman, together with letters addressed to the principal merchants, promising great indulgence in case of immediate submission. By Carleton's orders, the messenger was sent to prison for a few days, and then drummed out of town.

Montgomery now prepared for an attack. The ground was frozen to a great depth, and covered with snow; he was scantily provided with intrenching tools, and had only a field train of artillery, and a few mortars. By dint of excessive labour a breastwork was thrown up, four hundred yards distant from the walls, and opposite to the gate of St. Louis, which is nearly in the centre. It was formed of gabions, ranged side by side, and filled with snow, over which water was thrown until thoroughly frozen. Here Captain Lamb mounted five light field-pieces and a howitzer. Several mortars were placed in the suburb of St. Roque, which extends on the left of the promontory, below the heights, and nearly on a level with the river.

From the "Ice Battery" Captain Lamb opened a well-sustained and well-directed fire upon the walls, but his field-pieces were too light to be effective. With his howitzer he threw shells into the town, and set it on fire in several places. For five days and nights the garrison was kept on the alert by the teasing fire of this battery. The object of Montgomery was to harass the town, and increase the dissatisfaction of the inhabitants. His flags of truce being still fired upon, he caused the Indians in his camp to shoot arrows into the town, having letters attached to them, addressed to the inhabitants, representing Carleton's

[1] Montgomery to Schuyler, Dec. 5.

refusal to treat, and advising them to rise in a body, and compel him. It was all in vain; whatever might have been the disposition of the inhabitants, they were completely under the control of the military.

On the evening of the fifth day, Montgomery paid a visit to the ice battery. The heavy artillery from the walls had repaid its ineffectual fire with ample usury. The brittle ramparts had been shivered like glass; several of the guns had been rendered useless. Just as the general arrived at the battery, a shot from the fortress dismounted one of the guns, and disabled many of the men. A second shot immediately following, was almost as destructive. "This is warm work, Sir," said Montgomery to Captain Lamb. "It is indeed, and certainly no place for you, Sir." "Why so, Captain?" "Because there are enough of us here to be killed, without the loss of you, which would be irreparable."

The general saw the insufficiency of the battery, and, on retiring, gave Captain Lamb permission to leave it whenever he thought proper. The veteran waited until after dark, when securing all the guns, he abandoned the ruined redoubt. The general in this visit was attended by Aaron Burr, whom he had appointed his aide-de-camp. Lamb wondered that he should encumber himself with such a boy. The perfect coolness and self-possession with which the youth mingled in this dangerous scene, and the fire which sparkled in his eye, soon convinced Lamb, according to his own account, that "the young volunteer was no ordinary man."[1]

Nearly three weeks had been consumed in these futile operations. The army, ill-clothed and ill-provided, was becoming impatient of the rigours of a Canadian winter; the term for which part of the troops had enlisted would expire with the year, and they already talked of returning home. Montgomery was sadly conscious of the insufficiency of his means; still he could not endure the thoughts of retiring from before the place without striking a blow. He knew that much was expected from him in consequence of his late achievements, and that the eyes of the public were

[1] Life of John Lamb, p. 125.

fixed upon this Canadian enterprise. He determined, therefore, to attempt to carry the place by *escalade*. One-third of his men were to set fire to the houses and stockades of the suburb of St. Roque, and force the barriers of the lower town; while the main body should scale the bastion of Cape Diamond.

It was a hazardous, almost a desperate project, yet it has met with the approbation of military men. He calculated upon the devotion and daring spirit of his men; upon the discontent which prevailed among the Canadians, and upon the incompetency of the garrison for the defence of such extensive works.

In regard to the devotion of his men, he was threatened with disappointment. When the plan of assault was submitted to a council of war, three of the captains in Arnold's division, the terms of whose companies were near expiring, declined to serve, unless they and their men could be transferred to another command. This almost mutinous movement, it is supposed, was fomented by Arnold's old adversary, Major Brown, and it was with infinite difficulty Montgomery succeeded in overcoming it.

The ladders were now provided for the *escalade*, and Montgomery waited with impatience for a favourable night to put it in execution. Smallpox and desertion had reduced his little army to seven hundred and fifty men. From certain movements of the enemy, it was surmised that the deserters had revealed his plan. He changed, therefore, the arrangement. Colonel Livingston was to make a false attack on the gate of St. Johns and set fire to it; Major Brown, with another detachment, was to menace the bastion of Cape Diamond. Arnold, with three hundred and fifty of the hardy fellows who had followed him through the wilderness, strengthened by Captain Lamb and forty of his company, was to assault the suburbs and batteries of St. Roque; while Montgomery, with the residue of his forces, was to pass below the bastion of Cape Diamond, defile along the river, carry the defences at Drummond's Wharf, and thus enter the lower town on one side, while Arnold forced his way into it on the other. These movements were all to be made at the same time, on the discharge of signal rockets: thus dis-

tracting the enemy, and calling their attention to four several points.

On the 31st of December, at two o'clock in the morning, the troops repaired to their several destinations, under cover of a violent snow-storm. By some accident or mistake, such as is apt to occur in complicated plans of attack, the signal rockets were let off before the lower divisions had time to get to their fighting-ground. They were descried by one of Maclean's Highland officers, who gave the alarm. Livingston, also, failed to make the false attack on the gate of St. Johns, which was to have caused a diversion favourable to Arnold's attack on the suburb below.

The feint by Major Brown, on the bastion of Cape Diamond, was successful, and concealed the march of General Montgomery. That gallant commander, descended from the heights to Wolfe's Cove, and led his division along the shore of the St. Lawrence, round the beetling promontory of Cape Diamond. The narrow approach to the lower town in that direction was traversed by a picket or stockade, defended by Canadian militia; beyond which was a second defence, a kind of block-house, forming a battery of small pieces, manned by Canadian militia, and a few seamen, and commanded by the captain of a transport. The aim of Montgomery was to come upon these barriers by surprise. The pass which they defended is formidable at all times, having a swift river on one side, and overhanging precipices on the other; but at this time was rendered peculiarly difficult by drifting snow, and by great masses of ice piled on each other at the foot of the cliffs.

The troops made their way painfully, in extended and straggling files, along the narrow footway, and over the slippery piles of ice. Among the foremost, were some of the first New York regiment, led on by Captain Cheeseman. Montgomery, who was familiar with them, urged them on. "Forward, men of New York!" cried he. "You are not the men to flinch when your general leads you on!" In his eagerness, he threw himself far in the advance, with his pioneers and a few officers, and made a dash at the first barrier. The Canadians stationed there, taken by surprise, made a few random shots, then threw down their muskets and fled. Montgomery sprang forward,

aided with his own hand to pluck down the pickets, which the pioneers were sawing, and having made a breach sufficiently wide to admit three or four men abreast, entered sword in hand, followed by his staff, Captain Cheeseman, and some of his men. The Canadians had fled from the picket to the battery or block-house, but seemed to have carried the panic with them, for the battery remained silent. Montgomery felt for a moment as if his surprise had been complete. He paused in the breach to rally on the troops, who were stumbling along the difficult pass. "Push on, my brave boys," cried he, "Quebec is ours!"

He again dashed forward, but, when within forty paces of the battery, a discharge of grape-shot from a single cannon, made deadly havoc. Montgomery, and McPherson, one of his aides, were killed on the spot. Captain Cheeseman, who was leading on his New Yorkers, received a canister shot through the body; made an effort to rise and push onward, but fell back a corpse; with him fell his orderly sergeant and several of his men. This fearful slaughter, and the death of their general, threw everything in confusion. The officer next in lineal rank to the general was far in the rear: in this emergency, Colonel Campbell, quarter-master-general, took the command, but instead of rallying the men, and endeavouring to effect the junction with Arnold, ordered a retreat, and abandoned the half-won field, leaving behind him the bodies of the slain.

While all this was occurring on the side of Cape Diamond, Arnold led his division against the opposite side of the lower town along the suburb and street of St. Roque. Like Montgomery, he took the advance at the head of a forlorn hope of twenty-five men, accompanied by his secretary Oswald, formerly one of his captains at Ticonderoga. Captain Lamb and his artillery company came next, with a field-piece mounted on a sledge. Then came a company with ladders and scaling implements, followed by Morgan and his riflemen. In the rear of all these came the main body. A battery on a wharf commanded the narrow pass by which they had to advance. This was to be attacked with the field-piece, and then scaled with ladders by the forlorn hope; while Captain Morgan with his riflemen, was to pass round the wharf on the ice.

The false attack which was to have been made by Livingston on the gate of St. Johns, by way of diversion, had not taken place; there was nothing, therefore, to call off the attention of the enemy in this quarter from the detachment. The troops, as they straggled along in lengthened file through the drifting snow, were sadly galled by a flanking fire on the right, from walls and pickets. The field-piece at length became so deeply embedded in a snow-drift, that it could not be moved. Lamb sent word to Arnold of the impediment; in the mean time, he and his artillery company were brought to a halt. The company with the scaling ladders would have halted also, having been told to keep in the rear of the artillery; but they were urged on by Morgan with a thundering oath, who pushed on after them with his riflemen, the artillery company opening to the right and left to let them pass.

They arrived in the advance, just as Arnold was leading on his forlorn hope to attack the barrier. Before he reached it a severe wound in the right leg with a musket-ball completely disabled him, and he had to be borne from the field. Morgan instantly took the command. Just then Lamb came up with his company, armed with muskets and bayonets, having received orders to abandon the field-piece, and support the advance. Oswald joined him with the forlorn hope. The battery which commanded the defile mounted two pieces of cannon. There was a discharge of grape-shot when the assailants were close under the muzzle of the guns, yet but one man was killed. Before there could be a second discharge, the battery was carried by assault, some firing into the embrasures, others scaling the walls. The captain and thirty of his men were taken prisoners.

The day was just dawning as Morgan led on to attack the second barrier, and his men had to advance under a fire from the town walls on their right which incessantly thinned their ranks. The second barrier was reached; they applied their scaling ladders to storm it. The defence was brave and obstinate, but the defenders were at length driven from their guns, and the battery was gained. At the last moment one of the gunners ran back, linstock in hand, to give one more shot. Captain Lamb snapped a

fusee at him. It missed fire. The cannon was discharged, and a grape-shot wounded Lamb in the head, carrying away part of the cheek-bone. He was borne off senseless, to a neighbouring shed.

The two barriers being now taken, the way on this side into the lower town seemed open. Morgan prepared to enter it with the victorious vanguard; first stationing Captain Claiborne and some provincials at Palace Gate, which opened down into the defile from the upper town. By this time, however, the death of Montgomery and retreat of Campbell had enabled the enemy to turn all their attention in this direction. A large detachment, sent by General Carleton, sallied out of Palace Gate after Morgan had passed it, surprised and captured Dearborn and the guard, and completely cut off the advanced party. The main body, informed of the death of Montgomery, and giving up the game as lost, retreated to the camp, leaving behind the field-piece which Lamb's company had abandoned, and the mortars in the battery at St. Roque.

Morgan and his men were now hemmed in on all sides, and obliged to take refuge in a stone house, from the inveterate fire which assailed them. From the windows of this house they kept up a desperate defence, until cannon were brought to bear upon it. Then, hearing of the death of Montgomery, and seeing that there was no prospect of relief, Morgan and his gallant handful of followers were compelled to surrender themselves prisoners of war.

Thus foiled at every point, the wrecks of the little army abandoned their camp, and retreated about three miles from the town; where they hastily fortified themselves, apprehending a pursuit by the garrison. General Carleton, however, contented himself with having secured the safety of the place, and remained cautiously passive until he should be properly reinforced; distrusting the good faith of the motley inhabitants. He is said to have treated the prisoners with a humanity the more honourable, considering the "habitual military severity of his temper;" their heroic daring, displayed in the assault upon the lower town, having excited his admiration.

The remains of the gallant Montgomery received a soldier's grave, within the fortifications of Quebec, by the

care of Cramahé, the lieutenant-governor, who had formerly known him.

Arnold, wounded and disabled, had been assisted back to the camp, dragging one foot after the other for nearly a mile in great agony, and exposed continually to the musketry from the walls at fifty yards distance, which shot down several at his side.

He took temporary command of the shattered army, until General Wooster should arrive from Montreal, to whom he sent an express, urging him to bring on succour. "On this occasion," says a contemporary writer, "he discovered the utmost vigour of a determined mind, and a genius full of resources. Defeated and wounded, as he was, he put his troops into such a situation as to keep them still formidable.[1]

With a mere handful of men, at one time not exceeding five hundred, he maintained a blockade of the strong fortress from which he had just been repulsed. "I have no thoughts," writes he, "of leaving this proud town until I enter it in triumph. *I am in the way of my duty, and I know no fear!*"[2]

Happy for him had he fallen at this moment.—Happy for him had he found a soldier's and a patriot's grave, beneath the rock-built walls of Quebec. Those walls would have remained enduring monuments of his renown. His name, like that of Montgomery, would have been treasured up among the dearest, though most mournful recollections of his country, and that country would have been spared the single traitorous blot that dims the bright page of its revolutionary history.

[1] Civil War in America, vol. i. p. 112.
[2] See Arnold's Letter. Remembrancer, ii. 368.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Correspondence of Washington and Schuyler on the Disasters in Canada—Reinforcements required from New England—Dangers in the Interior of New York—Johnson Hall beleaguered—Sir John capitulates—Generous Conduct of Schuyler—Governor Tryon and the Tories—Tory machinations—Lee at New York—Sir Henry Clinton in the Harbour—Menaces of Lee—The City and River fortified—Lee's Treatment of the Tories—His Plans of Fortification—Ordered to the Command in Canada—His speculations on Titles of Dignity.

SCHUYLER's letter to Washington, announcing the recent events, was written with manly feeling. "I wish," said he, "I had no occasion to send my dear general this melancholy account. My amiable friend, the gallant Montgomery is no more; the brave Arnold is wounded; and we have met with a severe check in an unsuccessful attempt on Quebec. May Heaven be graciously pleased that the misfortune may terminate here! I tremble for our people in Canada."

Alluding to his recent request to retire from the army, he writes: "Our affairs are much worse than when I made the request. This is motive sufficient for me to continue to serve my country in any way I can be thought most serviceable; but my utmost can be but little, weak and indisposed as I am."

Washington was deeply moved by the disastrous intelligence. "I most sincerely condole with you," writes he, in reply to Schuyler, "upon the fall of the brave and worthy Montgomery. In the death of this gentleman, America has sustained a heavy loss. I am much concerned for the intrepid and enterprising Arnold, and greatly fear that consequences of the most alarming nature will result from this well-intended, but unfortunate attempt."

General Schuyler, who was now in Albany, urged the necessity of an immediate reinforcement of three thousand men for the army in Canada. Washington had not a man to spare from the army before Boston. He applied, therefore, on his own responsibility, to Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut, for three regiments, which were granted. His prompt measure received the approbation of Congress, and further reinforcements were ordered from the same quarters.

Solicitude was awakened about the interior of the province of New York. Arms and ammunition were said to be concealed in Tryon County, and numbers of the Tories in that neighbourhood preparing for hostilities. Sir John Johnson had fortified Johnson Hall, gathered about him his Scotch Highland tenants and Indian allies, and it was rumoured he intended to carry fire and sword along the valley of the Mohawk.

Schuyler, in consequence, received orders from Congress, to take measures for securing the military stores, disarming the disaffected, and apprehending their chiefs. He forthwith hastened from Albany, at the head of a body of soldiers; was joined by Colonel Herkimer, with the militia of Tryon County marshalled forth on the frozen bosom of the Mohawk River, and appeared before Sir John's stronghold, near Johnstown, on the 19th of January.

Thus beleaguered, Sir John, after much negotiation, capitulated. He was to surrender all weapons of war and military stores in his possession, and to give his parole not to take arms against America. On these conditions he was to be at liberty to go as far westward in Tryon County as the German Flats and Kingsland districts, and to every part of the colony to the southward and eastward of these districts; provided he did not go into any seaport town.

Sir John intimated a trust, that he, and the gentlemen with him, would be permitted to retain such arms as were their own property. The reply was characteristic: "General Schuyler's feelings as a gentleman, induce him to consent that Sir John Johnson may retain the few favourite family arms, he making a list of them. General Schuyler never refused a gentleman his side-arms."

The capitulation being adjusted, Schuyler ordered his troops to be drawn up in line at noon (Jan. 20th), between his quarters and the Court House, to receive the surrender of the Highlanders, enjoining profound silence on his officers and men, when the surrender should be made. Everything was conducted with great regard to the feelings of Sir John's Scottish adherents; they marched to the front, grounded their arms, and were dismissed with exhortations to good behaviour.

The conduct of Schuyler throughout this affair, drew

forth a resolution of Congress, applauding him for his fidelity, prudence, and expedition, and the proper temper he had maintained toward the "deluded people" in question. Washington, too, congratulated him on his success. "I hope," writes he, "General Lee will execute a work of the same kind on Long Island. It is high time to begin with our internal foes, when we are threatened with such severity of chastisement from our kind parent without."

The recent reverses in Canada had, in fact, heightened the solicitude of Washington about the province of New York. That province was the central and all-important link in the confederacy; but he feared it might prove a brittle one. We have already mentioned the adverse influences in operation there. A large number of friends to the crown among the official and commercial classes, rank Tories (as they were called), in the city and about the neighbouring country, particularly on Long and Staten Islands; king's ships at anchor in the bay and harbour, keeping up a suspicious intercourse with the citizens; while Governor Tryon, castled, as it were, on board of one of these ships, carried on intrigues with those disaffected to the popular cause, in all parts of the neighbourhood. County committees had been empowered, by the New York Congress and Convention, to apprehend all persons notoriously disaffected, to examine into their conduct, and ascertain whether they were guilty of any hostile act or machination. Imprisonment or banishment was the penalty. The committees could call upon the militia to aid in the discharge of their functions. Still, disaffection to the cause was said to be rife in the province, and Washington looked to General Lee for effective measures to suppress it.

Lee arrived at New York on the 4th of February, his caustic humours sharpened by a severe attack of the gout, which had rendered it necessary, while on the march, to carry him for a considerable part of the way in a litter. His correspondence is a complete mental barometer. "I consider it as a piece of the greatest good fortune," writes he to Washington (Feb. 5th), "that the Congress have detached a committee to this place, otherwise I should have made a most ridiculous figure, besides bringing upon

myself the enmity of the whole province. My hands were effectually tied up from taking any step necessary for the public service by the late resolve of Congress, putting every detachment of the continental forces under the command of the Provincial Congress where such detachment is."

By a singular coincidence, on the very day of his arrival Sir Henry Clinton, with the squadron which had sailed so mysteriously from Boston, looked into the harbour. "Though it was sabbath," says a letter-writer of the day, "it threw the whole city into such a convulsion as it never knew before. Many of the inhabitants hastened to move their effects into the country, expecting an immediate conflict. All that day and all night were there carts going and boats loading, and women and children crying, and distressed voices heard in the roads in the dead of the night."[1]

Clinton sent for the mayor, and expressed much surprise and concern at the distress caused by his arrival, which was merely, he said, on a short visit to his friend Tryon, and to see how matters stood. He professed a juvenile love for the place, and desired that the inhabitants might be informed of the purport of his visit, and that he would go away as soon as possible.

"He brought no troops with him," writes Lee, "and pledges his honour that none are coming. He says it is merely a visit to his friend Tryon. If it is really so, it is the most whimsical piece of civility I ever heard of."

A gentleman in New York, writing to a friend in Philadelphia, reports one of the general's characteristic menaces, which kept the town in a fever.

"Lee says, he will send word on board of the men-of-war, that, if they set a house on fire, he will chain a hundred of their friends by the neck, and make the house their funeral pile."[2]

For this time, the inhabitants of New York were let off for their fears. Clinton, after a brief visit, continued his mysterious cruise, openly avowing his destination to be

[1] Remembrancer, vol. iii.
[2] Am. Archives, 5th Series, iv. 941.

North Carolina—which nobody believed, simply because he avowed it.

The Duke of Manchester, speaking in the House of Lords of the conduct of Clinton, contrasts it with that of Lord Dunmore, who wrapped Norfolk in flames. "I will pass no censure on that noble lord," said he, "but I could wish that he had acted with that generous spirit that forbade Clinton uselessly to destroy the town of New York. My lords, Clinton visited New York; the inhabitants expected its destruction. Lee appeared before it with an army too powerful to be attacked, and Clinton passed by without doing any wanton damage."

The necessity of conferring with committees at every step, was a hard restraint upon a man of Lee's ardent and impatient temper, who had a soldierlike contempt for the men of peace around him; yet at the outset he bore it better than might have been expected.

"The Congress committees, a certain number of the committee of safety, and your humble servant," writes he to Washington, "have had two conferences. The result is such as will agreeably surprise you. It is in the first place agreed, and justly, that to fortify the town against shipping is impracticable; but we are to fortify lodgements on some commanding part of the city for two thousand men. We are to erect enclosed batteries on both sides of the water, near Hell Gate, which will answer the double purpose of securing the town against piracies through the Sound, and secure our communication with Long Island, now become a more important point than ever; as it is determined to form a strong fortified camp of three thousand men, on the Island, immediately opposite to New York. The pass in the Highlands is to be made as respectable as possible, and guarded by a battalion. In short, I think the plan judicious and complete."

The pass in the Highlands above alluded to, is that grand defile of the Hudson, where, for upwards of fifteen miles, it wends its deep channel between stern, forest-clad mountains and rocky promontories. Two forts, about six miles distant from each other, and commanding narrow parts of the river at its bends through these Highlands, had been commenced in the preceding autumn, by order of the Con-

tinental Congress; but they were said to be insufficient for the security of that important pass, and were to be extended and strengthened.

Washington had charged Lee, in his instructions, to keep a stern eye upon the Tories, who were active in New York. "You can seize upon the persons of the principals," said he; "they must be so notoriously known, that there will be little danger of committing mistakes." Lee acted up to the letter of these instructions, and weeded out, with a vigorous hand, some of the rankest of the growth. This gave great offence to the peace-loving citizens, who insisted that he was arrogating a power vested solely in the civil authority. One of them, well-affected to the cause, writes: "To see the vast number of houses shut up, one would think the city almost evacuated. Women and children are scarcely to be seen in the streets. Troops are daily coming in; they break open and quarter themselves in any house they find shut."[1]

The enemy, too, regarded his measures with apprehension. "That arch-rebel Lee," writes a British officer, "has driven all the well-affected people from the town of New York. If something is not speedily done, his Britannic majesty's American dominions will be confined within a very narrow compass."[2]

In the exercise of his military functions, Lee set Governor Tyron and the captain of the Asia at defiance. "They had threatened perdition to the town," writes he to Washington, "if the cannon were removed from the batteries and wharves, but I ever considered their threats as a *brutum fulmen*, and even persuaded the town to be of the same way of thinking. We accordingly conveyed them to a place of safety in the middle of the day, and no cannonade ensued. Captain Parker publishes a pleasant reason for his passive conduct. He says, that it was manifestly my intention, and that of the New England-men under my command, to bring destruction on this town, so hated for their loyal principles, but that he was determined not to indulge us; so remained quiet out of spite. The people

[1] Fred. Rhinelander to Peter Van Schaack, Feb. 23
[2] Am. Archives, v. 425.

here laugh at his nonsense, and begin to despise the menaces which formerly used to throw them into convulsions."

Washington appears to have shared the merriment. In his reply to Lee, he writes, "I could not avoid laughing at Captain Parker's reasons for not putting his repeated threats into execution,"—a proof, by the way, under his own hand, that he could laugh occasionally; and even when surrounded by perplexities.

According to Lee's account, the New Yorkers showed a wonderful alacrity in removing the cannon. "Men and boys of all ages," writes he, "worked with the greatest zeal and pleasure. I really believe the generality are as well affected as any on the continent." Some of the well-affected, however, thought he was rather too self-willed and high-handed. "Though General Lee has many things to recommend him as a general," writes one of them, "yet I think he was out of luck when he ordered the removal of the guns from the battery; as it was without the approbation or knowledge of our Congress."[1]—Lee seldom waited for the approbation of Congress, in moments of exigency.

He now proceeded with his plan of defences. A strong redoubt, capable of holding three hundred men, was commenced at Horen's Hook, commandiug the pass at Hell Gate, so as to block up from the enemy's ships the passage between the mainland and Long Island. A regiment was stationed on the island, making fascines, and preparing other materials for constructing the works for an intrenched camp, which Lee hoped would render it impossible for the enemy to get a footing there. "What to do with this city," writes he, "I own puzzles me. It is so encircled with deep navigable water, that whoever commands the sea must command the town. To-morrow I shall begin to dismantle that part of the fort next to the town, to prevent its being converted into a citadel. I shall barrier the principal streets, and, at least, if I cannot make it a continental garrison, it shall be a disputable field of battle." Batteries were to be erected on an eminence behind Trinity Church, to keep the enemy's ships at so great a distance as not to injure the town.

[1] Fred. Rhinelander to Peter Van Schaack.

King's Bridge, at the upper end of Manhattan or New York Island, linking it with the mainland, was pronounced by Lee "a most important pass, without which the city could have no communication with Connecticut." It was, therefore, to be made as strong as possible.

Heavy cannon were to be sent up to the forts in the Highlands; which were to be enlarged and strengthened.

In the midst of his schemes, Lee received orders from Congress to the command in Canada, vacant by the death of Montgomery. He bewailed the defenceless condition of the city; the Continental Congress, as he said, not having, as yet, taken the least step for its security. "The instant I leave it," said he, "I conclude the Provincial Congress, and inhabitants in general, will relapse into their former hysterics. The men-of-war and Mr. Tryon will return to their old station at the wharves, and the first regiments who arrive from England, will take quiet possession of the town and Long Island."

It must be observed that, in consequence of his military demonstrations in the city, the enemy's ships had drawn off and dropped down the bay; and he had taken vigorous measures, without consulting the committees, to put an end to the practice of supplying them with provisions.

"Governor Tryon and the 'Asia,'" writes he to Washington, "continue between Nutten and Bedlow's Islands. It has pleased his excellency, in violation of the compact he has made, to seize several vessels from Jersey laden with flour. It has, in return, pleased my excellency to stop all provisions from the city, and cut off all intercourse with him,—a measure which has thrown the mayor, council, and Tories into agonies. The propensity, or rather rage, for paying court to this great man, is inconceivable. They cannot be weaned from him. We must put wormwood on his paps, or they will cry to suck, as they are in their second childhood."

We would observe, in explanation of a sarcasm in the above-quoted letter, that Lee professed a great contempt for the titles of respect which it was the custom to prefix to the names of men in office or command. He scoffed at them, as unworthy of "a great, free, manly, equal commonwealth." "For my own part," said he, "I would as

lief they would put ratsbane in my mouth, as the excellency with which I am daily crammed. How much more true dignity was there in the simplicity of address among the Romans! Marcus Tullius Cicero, Decius Bruto Imperatori, or Caio Marcello Consuli, than to 'His Excellency Major-General Noodle,' or to the 'Honourable John Doodle.'"

CHAPTER LIX.

Monotonous State of Affairs before Boston—Washington anxious for Action—Exploit of Putnam—Its Dramatic Consequences—The Farce of the Blockade of Boston—An alarming interruption—Distresses of the Besieged—Washington's irksome predicament—His bold proposition—Demur of the Council of War—Arrival of Knox with Artillery—Dorchester Heights to be seized and fortified—Preparations for the attempt.

The siege of Boston continued through the winter, without any striking incident to enliven its monotony. The British remained within their works, leaving the beleaguering army slowly to augment its forces. The country was dissatisfied with the inaction of the latter. Even Congress was anxious for some successful blow that might revive popular enthusiasm. Washington shared this anxiety, and had repeatedly, in councils of war, suggested an attack upon the town, but had found a majority of his general officers opposed to it. He had hoped some favourable opportunity would present, when, the harbour being frozen, the troops might approach the town upon the ice. The winter, however, though severe at first, proved a mild one, and the bay continued open. General Putnam, in the mean time, having completed the new works at Lechmere Point, and being desirous of keeping up the spirit of his men, resolved to treat them to an exploit. Accordingly, from his "impregnable fortress" of Cobble Hill, he detached a party of about two hundred, under his favourite officer, Major Knowlton, to surprise and capture a British guard stationed at Charlestown. It was a daring enterprise, and executed with spirit. As Charlestown Neck was completely protected, Knowlton led his men across the mill-dam, round the base of the hill, and imme-

diately below the fort; set fire to the guard-house and some buildings in its vicinity: made several prisoners, and retired without loss; although thundered upon by the cannon of the fort. The exploit was attended by a dramatic effect on which Putnam had not calculated. The British officers, early in the winter, had fitted up a theatre, which was well attended by the troops and Tories. On the evening in question, an afterpiece was to be performed, entitled, "the Blockade of Boston," intended as a burlesque on the patriot army which was beleaguering it. Washington is said to have been represented in it as an awkward lout, equipped with a huge wig, and a long rusty sword, attended by a country booby as orderly sergeant, in rustic garb, with an old firelock seven or eight feet long.

The theatre was crowded, especially by the military. The first piece was over, and the curtain was rising for the farce, when a sergeant made his appearance, and announced that "the alarm guns were firing at Charlestown, and the Yankees attacking Bunker's Hill." At first this was supposed to be a part of the entertainment, until General Howe gave the word, "Officers, to your alarm posts."

Great confusion ensued; every one scrambled out of the theatre as fast as possible. There was, as usual, some shrieking and fainting of ladies; and the farce of the "Blockade of Boston" had a more serious than comic termination.

The 'London Chronicle,' in a sneering comment on Boston affairs, gave Burgoyne as the author of this burlesque afterpiece, though perhaps unjustly. "General Burgoyne has opened a theatrical campaign, of which himself is sole manager, being determined to act with the Provincials on the defensive only. Tom Thumb has been already represented; while, on the other hand, the Provincials are preparing to exhibit, early in the spring, 'Measure for Measure.'"

The British officers, like all soldiers by profession, endeavoured to wile away the time by every amusement within their reach; but, in truth, the condition of the besieged town was daily becoming more and more distressing. The inhabitants were without flour, pulse, or

vegetables; the troops were nearly as destitute. There was a lack of fuel, too, as well as food. The smallpox broke out, and it was necessary to inoculate the army. Men, women, and children either left the city voluntarily, or were sent out of it; yet the distress increased. Several houses were broken open and plundered; others were demolished by the soldiery for fuel. General Howe resorted to the sternest measures to put a stop to these excesses. The provost was ordered to go the rounds with the hangman, and hang up the first man he should detect in the fact without waiting for further proof for trial. Offenders were punished with four hundred, six hundred, and even one thousand lashes. The wife of a private soldier, convicted of receiving stolen goods, was sentenced to one hundred lashes on her bare back, at the cart's tail, in different parts of the town, and an imprisonment of three months.

Meanwhile, Washington was incessantly goaded by the impatient murmurs of the public, as we may judge by his letters to Mr. Reed. "I know the integrity of my own heart," writes he, on the 10th of February, "but to declare it, unless to a friend, may be an argument of vanity. I know the unhappy predicament I stand in; I know that much is expected of me; I know that without men, without arms, without ammunition, without anything fit for the accommodation of a soldier, little is to be done; and what is mortifying, I know that I cannot stand justified to the world without exposing my own weakness, and injuring the cause, by declaring my wants, which I am determined not to do further than unavoidable necessity brings every man acquainted with them.

"My own situation is so irksome to me at times, that, if I did not consult the public good more than my own tranquillity, I should long ere this have put everything on the cast of a die. So far from my having an army of twenty thousand men well armed, I have been here with less than one half of that number, including sick, furloughed, and on command; and those neither clothed nor armed as they should be. In short, my situation has been such, that I have been obliged to use art to conceal it from my own officers."

How precious are those letters! and how fortunate that the absence of Mr. Reed from camp should have procured for us such confidential outpourings of Washington's heart at this time of its great trial!

He still adhered to his opinion in favour of an attempt upon the town. He was aware that it would be attended with considerable loss, but believed it would be successful if the men should behave well. Within a few days after the date of this letter, the bay became sufficiently frozen for the transportation of troops. "This," writes he to Reed, "I thought, knowing the ice would not last, a favourable opportunity to make an assault upon the troops in town. I proposed it in council; but behold, though we had been waiting all the year for this favourable event, the enterprise was thought too dangerous. Perhaps it was; perhaps the irksomeness of my situation led me to undertake more than could be warranted by prudence. I did not think so, and I am sure yet, that the enterprise, if it had been undertaken with resolution, must have succeeded without it, any would fail."

His proposition was too bold for the field-officers assembled in council (Feb. 16th), who objected that there was not force, nor arms and ammunition sufficient in camp for such an attempt. Washington acquiesced in the decision, it being almost unanimous; yet he felt the irksomeness of his situation. "To have the eyes of the whole continent," said he, "fixed with anxious expectation of hearing of some great event, and to be restrained in every military operation for want of the necessary means of carrying it on, is not very pleasing, especially as the means used to conceal my weakness from the enemy, conceal it also from our friends, and add to their wonder."

In the council of war above mentioned, a cannonnade and bombardment were considered advisable, as soon as there should be a sufficiency of powder; in the mean time preparations might be made for taking possession of Dorchester Heights, and Noddle's Island.

At length the camp was rejoiced by the arrival of Colonel Knox, with his long train of sledges drawn by oxen, bringing more than fifty cannon, mortars, and howitzers, besides supplies of lead and flints. The zeal and perseverance

which he had displayed in his wintry expedition across frozen lakes and snowy wastes, and the intelligence with which he had fulfilled his instructions, won him the entire confidence of Washington. His conduct in this enterprise was but an earnest of that energy and ability which he displayed throughout the war.

Further ammunition being received from the royal arsenal at New York, and other quarters, and a reinforcement of ten regiments of militia, Washington no longer met with opposition to his warlike measures. Lechmere Point, which Putnam had fortified, was immediately to be supplied with mortars and heavy cannon, so as to command Boston on the north; and Dorchester Heights on the south of the town, were forthwith to be taken possession of. "If anything," said Washington, "will induce the enemy to hazard an engagement, it will be our attempting to fortify those heights, as, in that event taking place, we shall be able to command a great part of the town, and almost the whole harbour." Their possession, moreover, would enable him to push his works to Nook's Hill, and other points opposite Boston, whence a cannonade and bombardment must drive the enemy from the city.

The council of Massachusetts, at his request, ordered the militia of the towns contiguous to Dorchester and Roxbury, to hold themselves in readiness to repair to the lines at these places with arms, ammunition, and accoutrements, on receiving a preconcerted signal.

Washington felt painfully aware how much depended upon the success of this attempt. There was a cloud of gloom and distrust lowering upon the public mind. Danger threatened on the north and on the south. Montgomery had fallen before the walls of Quebec. The army in Canada was shattered. Tryon and the Tories were plotting mischief in New York. Dunmore was harassing the lower part of Virginia, and Clinton and his fleet were prowling along the coast, on a secret errand of mischief.

Washington's general orders evince the solemn and anxious state of his feelings. In those of the 26th of February, he forbade all playing at cards and other games of chance. "At this time of public distress," writes he, "men may find enough to do in the service of God and their country,

without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality. * * * * It is a noble cause we are engaged in; it is the cause of virtue and mankind; every advantage and comfort to us and our posterity depend upon the vigour of our exertions; in short, freedom or slavery must be the result of our conduct; there can, therefore, be no greater inducement to men to behave well. But it may not be amiss to the troops to know, that, if any man in action shall presume to skulk, hide himself, or retreat from the enemy without the orders of his commanding officer, he will be instantly shot down as an example of cowardice; cowards having too frequently disconcerted the best-formed troops by their dastardly behaviour."

In the general plan it was concerted, that, should the enemy detach a large force to dislodge our men from Dorchester Heights, as had been done in the affair of Bunker's Hill, an attack upon the opposite side of the town should forthwith be made by General Putnam. For this purpose he was to have four thousand picked men in readiness, in two divisions, under Generals Sullivan and Greene. At a concerted signal from Roxbury, they were to embark in boats near the mouth of Charles River, cross under cover of the fire of three floating batteries, land in two places in Boston, secure its strong posts, force the gates and works at the Neck, and let in the Roxbury troops.

CHAPTER LX.

The affair of Dorchester Heights—American and English Letters respecting it—A Laborious Night—Revelations at Daybreak—Howe in a Perplexity—A Night Attack meditated—Stormy Weather—The Town to be evacuated—Negotiations and Arrangements—Preparations to embark—Excesses of the Troops Boston evacuated—Speech of the Duke of Manchester on the subject—A Medal voted by Congress.

The evening of Monday, the 4th of March, was fixed upon for the occupation of Dorchester Heights. The ground was frozen too hard to be easily intrenched; fascines, therefore, and gabions, and bundles of screwed hay, were collected during the two preceding nights, with which to form breastworks and redoubts. During these two busy

nights the enemy's batteries were cannonaded and bombarded from opposite points, to occupy their attention and prevent their noticing these preparations. They replied with spirit, and the incessant roar of artillery thus kept up, covered completely the rumbling of waggons and ordnance.

How little the enemy were aware of what was impending, we may gather from the following extract of a letter from an officer of distinction in the British army in Boston, to his friend in London, dated on the 3rd of March :—

"For these last six weeks or near two months, we have been better amused than could possibly be expected in our situation. We had a theatre, we had balls, and there is actually a subscription on foot for a masquerade. England seems to have forgot us, and we have endeavoured to forget ourselves. But we were roused to a sense of our situation last night, in a manner unpleasant enough. The rebels have been for some time past erecting a bomb battery, and last night began to play upon us. Two shells fell not far from me. One fell upon Colonel Monckton's house, but luckily did not burst until it had crossed the street. Many houses were damaged, but no lives lost. The rebel army," adds he, "is not brave, I believe, but it is agreed on all hands that their artillery officers are at least equal to ours."[1]

The wife of John Adams, who resided in the vicinity of the American camp, and knew that a general action was meditated, expresses in a letter to her husband the feelings of a patriot woman during the suspense of these nights.

"I have been in a constant state of anxiety, since you left me," writes she on Saturday. "It has been said to-morrow, and to-morrow, for this month, and when the dreadful to-morrow will be, I know not. But hark! The house this instant shakes with the roar of cannon. I have been to the door, and find it is a cannonade from our army. Orders, I find, are come, for all the remaining militia to repair to the lines Monday night, by twelve o'clock. No sleep for me to-night."

On Sunday the letter is resumed. "I went to bed after twelve, but got no rest; the cannon continued firing, and

[1] Am. Archives, Fourth Series, v. 425.

my heart kept pace with them all night. We have had a pretty quiet day, but what to-morrow will bring forth God only knows."

On Monday, the appointed evening, she continues: "I have just returned from Penn's Hill, where I have been sitting to hear the amazing roar of cannon, and from whence I could see every shell which was thrown. The sound, I think, is one of the grandest in nature, and is of the true species of the sublime. 'Tis now an incessant roar; but oh, the fatal ideas which are connected with the sound! How many of our dear countrymen must fall!

"I went to bed about twelve, and rose again a little after one. I could no more sleep than if I had been in the engagement; the rattling of the windows, the jar of the house, the continual roar of twenty-four pounders, and the bursting of shells, give us such ideas, and realize a scene to us of which we could scarcely form any conception. I hope to give you joy of Boston, even if it is in ruins, before I send this away."

On the Monday evening thus graphically described, as soon as the firing commenced, the detachment under General Thomas set out on its cautious and secret march from the lines of Roxbury and Dorchester. Every thing was conducted as regularly and quietly as possible. A covering party of eight hundred men preceded the carts with the intrenching tools; then came General Thomas with the working party, twelve hundred strong, followed by a train of three hundred waggons, laden with fascines, gabions, and hay screwed into bundles of seven or eight hundred weight. A great number of such bundles were ranged in a line along Dorchester Neck on the side next the enemy, to protect the troops, while passing, from being raked by the fire of the enemy. Fortunately, although the moon, as Washington writes, was shining in its full lustre, the flash and roar of cannonry from opposite points, and the bursting of bombshells high in the air, so engaged and diverted the attention of the enemy, that the detachment reached the heights about eight o'clock without being heard or perceived. The covering party then divided; one-half proceeded to the point nearest Boston, the other to the one nearest to Castle Williams. The working party

commenced to fortify, under the directions of Gridley, the veteran engineer, who had planned the works on Bunker's Hill. It was severe labour, for the earth was frozen eighteen inches deep; but the men worked with more than their usual spirit, for the eye of the commander-in-chief was upon them. Though not called there by his duties, Washington could not be absent from this eventful operation. An eloquent orator has imagined his situation—"All around him intense movement; while nothing was to be heard excepting the tread of busy feet and the dull sound of the mattock upon the frozen soil. Beneath him the slumbering batteries of the castle; the roadsteads and harbour filled with the vessels of the royal fleet, motionless, except as they swung round at their moorings, at the turn of the midnight tide; the beleaguered city occupied with a powerful army, and a considerable non-combatant population, startled into unnatural vigilance by the incessant and destructive cannonade, yet unobservant of the great operations in progress so near them; the surrounding country, dotted with a hundred rural settlements, roused from the deep sleep of a New England village, by the unwonted glare and tumult."[1]

The same plastic fancy suggests the crowd of visions, phantoms of the past, which may have passed through Washington's mind, on this night of feverish excitement. "His early training in the wilderness; his escape from drowning, and the deadly rifle of the savage in the perilous mission to Venango; the shower of iron hail through which he rode unharmed on Braddock's field; the early stages of the great conflict now brought to its crisis, and still more solemnly, the possibilities of the future for himself and for America—the ruin of the patriot cause if he failed at the outset; the triumphant consolidation of the Revolution if he prevailed."

The labours of the night were carried on by the Americans with their usual activity and address. When a relief party arrived at four o'clock in the morning, two forts were in sufficient forwardness to furnish protection against small-arms and grape-shot; and such use was

[1] Oration of the Hon. Edward Everett at Dorchester, July 4th, 1855.

made of the fascines and bundles of screwed hay, that, at dawn, a formidable-looking fortress frowned along the height. We have the testimony of a British officer, already quoted, for the fact. "This morning at daybreak we discovered two redoubts on Dorchester Point, and two smaller ones on their flanks. They were all raised during the last night, with an expedition equal to that of the genii belonging to Aladdin's wonderful lamp. From these hills they command the whole town, so that we must drive them from their post or desert the place."

Howe gazed at the mushroom fortress with astonishment as it loomed indistinctly, but grandly, through a morning fog. "The rebels," exclaimed he, "have done more work in one night than my whole army would have done in one month."

Washington had watched, with intense anxiety, the effect of the revelation at daybreak. "When the enemy first discovered our works in the morning," writes he, "they seemed to be in great confusion, and, from their movements, to intend an attack."

An American, who was on Dorchester Heights, gives a picture of the scene. A tremendous cannonade was commenced from the forts in Boston and the shipping in the harbour. "Cannon-shot," writes he, "are continually rolling and rebounding over the hill, and it is astonishing to observe how little our soldiers are terrified by them. The royal troops are perceived to be in motion, as if embarking to pass the harbour, and land on Dorchester shore to attack our works. The hills and elevations in this vicinity are covered with spectators, to witness deeds of horror in the expected conflict. His excellency, General Washington, is present, animating and encouraging the soldiers, and they in return manifest their joy, and express a warm desire for the approach of the enemy; each man knows his own place. Our breastworks are strengthened, and among the means of defence are a great number of barrels, filled with stones and sand, and arranged in front of our works, which are to be put in motion, and made to roll down the hill, to break the ranks and legs of the assailants as they advance."

General Thomas was reinforced with two thousand men.

Old Putnam stood ready to make a descent upon the north side of the town, with his four thousand picked men, as soon as the heights on the south should be assailed: "All the forenoon," says the American above cited, "we were in momentary expectation of witnessing an awful scene; nothing less than the carnage of Breed's Hill battle was expected."

As Washington rode about the heights, he reminded the troops that it was the 5th of March, the anniversary of the Boston massacre, and called on them to revenge the slaughter of their brethren. They answered him with shouts. "Our officers and men," writes he, "appeared impatient for the appeal. The event, I think, must have been fortunate; nothing less than success and victory on our side."

Howe, in the mean time, was perplexed between his pride and the hazards of his position. In his letters to the ministry, he had scouted the idea of "being in danger from the rebels." He had "hoped they would attack him." Apparently, they were about to fulfil his hopes, and with formidable advantages of position. He must dislodge them from Dorchester Heights, or evacuate Boston. The latter was an alternative too mortifying to be readily adopted. He resolved on an attack, but it was to be a night one.

"A body of light infantry, under the command of Major Mulgrave, and a body of grenadiers, are to embark to-night at seven," writes the gay British officer already quoted. "I think it likely to be a general affair. Adieu balls, masquerades, &c., for this may be looked upon as the opening of the campaign."

In the evening the British began to move. Lord Percy was to lead the attack. Twenty-five hundred men were embarked in transports, which were to convey them to the rendezvous at Castle Williams. A violent storm set in from the east. The transports could not reach their place of destination. The men-of-war could not cover and support them. A furious surf beat on the shore where the boats would have to land. The attack was consequently postponed until the following day.

That day was equally unpropitious. The storm continued, with torrents of rain. The attack was again post-

poned. In the meantime, the Americans went on strengthening their works; by the time the storm subsided, General Howe deemed them too strong to be easily carried; the attempt, therefore, was relinquished altogether.

What was to be done? The shells thrown from the heights into the town proved that it was no longer tenable. The fleet was equally exposed. Admiral Shuldham, the successor to Graves, assured Howe that if the Americans maintained possession of the heights his ships could not remain in the harbour. It was determined, therefore, in a council of war, to evacuate the place as soon as possible. But now came on a humiliating perplexity. The troops, in embarking, would be exposed to a destructive fire. How was this to be prevented? General Howe's pride would not suffer him to make capitulations; he endeavoured to work on the fears of the Bostonians by hinting that, if his troops were molested while embarking, he might be obliged to cover their retreat by setting fire to the town.

The hint had its effect. Several of the principal inhabitants communicated with him through the medium of General Robertson. The result of the negotiation was, that a paper was concocted and signed by several of the "select men" of Boston, stating the fears they had entertained of the destruction of the place, but that those fears had been quieted by General Howe's declaration that it should remain uninjured, provided his troops were unmolested while embarking; the select men, therefore, begged "some assurance that so dreadful a calamity might not be brought on by any measures from without."

This paper was sent out from Boston, on the evening of the 8th, with a flag of truce, which bore it to the American lines at Roxbury. There it was received by Colonel Learned, and carried by him to head-quarters. Washington consulted with such of the general officers as he could immediately assemble. The paper was not addressed to him nor to any one else. It was not authenticated by the signature of General Howe; nor was there any other act obliging that commander to fulfil the promise asserted to have been made by him. It was deemed proper, therefore, that Washington should give no answer to the paper, but that Colonel Learned should signify in a letter his having

laid it before the commander-in-chief, and the reasons assigned for not answering it.

With this uncompromising letter the flag returned to Boston. The Americans suspended their fire, but continued to fortify their positions. On the night of the 9th a detachment was sent to plant a battery on Nooks Hill, an eminence of Dorchester, which lies nearest to Boston Neck. A fire kindled behind the hill revealed the project. It provoked a cannonade from the British, which was returned with interest from Cobble Hill, Lechmere Point, Cambridge, and Roxbury. The roar of cannonry and bursting of bombshells prevailed from half after eight at night until six in the morning. It was another night of terror to the people of Boston; but the Americans had to desist, for the present, from the attempt to fortify Nooks Hill. Among the accidents of the bombardment was the bursting of Putnam's vaunted mortar, "the Congress."

Daily preparations were now made by the enemy for departure. By proclamation, the inhabitants were ordered to deliver up all linen and woollen goods, and all other goods, that, in possession of the rebels, would aid them in carrying on the war. Crean Bush, a New York Tory, was authorized to take possession of such goods and put them on board of two of the transports. Under cover of his commission, he and his myrmidons broke open stores and stripped them of their contents. Marauding gangs from the fleet and army followed their example, and extended their depredations to private houses. On the 14th, Howe, in a general order, declared that the first soldier caught plundering should be hanged on the spot. Still on the 16th houses were broken open, goods destroyed, and furniture defaced by the troops. Some of the furniture, it is true, belonged to the officers, and was destroyed because they could neither sell it nor carry it away.

The letter of a British officer gives a lively picture of the hurried preparations for retreat. "Our not being burdened with provisions, permitted us to save some stores and ammunition, the light field-pieces, and such things as were most convenient of carriage. The rest, I am sorry to say, we were obliged to leave behind; such of the guns as by dismounting we could throw into the sea was so done.

The carriages were disabled, and every precaution taken that our circumstances would permit; for our retreat was by agreement. The people of the town who were friends to government took care of nothing but their merchandise, and found means to employ the men belonging to the transports in embarking their goods, so that several of the vessels were entirely filled with private property instead of the king's stores. By some unavoidable accident, the medicines, surgeons' chests, instruments, and necessaries were left in the hospital. The confusion unavoidable to such a disaster will make you conceive how much must be forgot where every man had a private concern. The necessary care and distress of the women, children, sick, and wounded required every assistance that could be given. It was not like breaking up a camp, where every man knows his duty; it was like departing your country with your wives, your servants, your household furniture, and all your incumbrances. The officers, who felt the disgrace of their retreat, did their utmost to keep up appearances. The men who thought they were changing for the better strove to take advantage of the present times, and were kept from plunder and drink with difficulty."[1]

For some days the embarkation of the troops was delayed by adverse winds. Washington, who was imperfectly informed of affairs in Boston, feared that the movements there might be a feint. Determined to bring things to a crisis, he detached a force to Nooks Hill on Saturday the 16th, which threw up a breastwork in the night, regardless of the cannonading of the enemy. This commanded Boston Neck and the south part of the town; and a deserter brought a false report to the British that a general assault was intended.

The embarkation, so long delayed, began with hurry and confusion at four o'clock in the morning. The harbour of Boston soon presented a striking and tumultuous scene. There were seventy-eight ships and transports casting loose for sea, and eleven or twelve thousand men—soldiers, sailors, and refugees—hurrying to embark; many, especially of the latter, with their families and personal effects.

[1] Remembrancer, vol. iii. p. 108.

The refugees, in fact, laboured under greater disadvantages than the king's troops, being obliged to man their own vessels, as sufficient seamen could not be spared from the king's transports. Speaking of those "who had taken upon themselves the style and title of government men" in Boston, and acted an unfriendly part in this great contest, Washington observes: "By all accounts there never existed a more miserable set of beings than these wretched creatures now are. Taught to believe that the power of Great Britain was superior to all opposition, and that foreign aid, if not, was at hand, they were even higher and more insulting in their opposition than the Regulars. When the order issued, therefore, for embarking the troops in Boston, no electric shock—no sudden clap of thunder—in a word, the last trump could not have struck them with greater consternation. They were at their wits' end, and, conscious of their black ingratitude, chose to commit themselves, in the manner I have above described, to the mercy of the waves at a tempestuous season, rather than meet their offended countrymen."[1]

While this tumultuous embarkation was going on, the Americans looked on in silence from their batteries on Dorchester Heights, without firing a shot. "It was lucky for the inhabitants now left in Boston, that they did not," writes a British officer; "for I am informed everything was prepared to set the town in a blaze, had they fired one cannon."[2]

At an early hour of the morning, the troops stationed at Cambridge and Roxbury had paraded, and several regiments under Putnam had embarked in boats, and dropped down Charles River, to Sewall's Point, to watch the movements of the enemy by land and water. About nine o'clock a large body of troops was seen marching down Bunker's Hill, while boats full of soldiers were putting off for the shipping. Two scouts were sent from the camp to reconnoitre. The works appeared still to be occupied, for sentries were posted about them with shouldered muskets. Observing them to be motionless, the scouts made nearer scrutiny, and discovered them to be mere effigies, set up

[1] Letter to John A. Washington, Am. Arch. 4th S. v. 560.
[2] Frothingham, Siege of Boston, 310.

to delay the advance of the Americans. Pushing on, they found the works deserted, and gave signal of the fact; whereupon, a detachment was sent from the camp to take possession.

Part of Putnam's troops were now sent back to Cambridge; a part were ordered forward to occupy Boston. General Ward, too, with five hundred men, made his way from Roxbury, across the neck, about which the enemy had scattered caltrops or crow's feet,[1] to impede the invasion. The gates were unbarred and thrown open, and the Americans entered in triumph, with drums beating and colours flying.

By ten o'clock the enemy were all embarked and under way: Putnam had taken command of the city, and occupied the important points, and the flag of thirteen stripes, the standard of the Union, floated above all the forts.

On the following day, Washington himself entered the town, where he was joyfully welcomed. He beheld around him sad traces of the devastation caused by the bombardment, though not to the extent that he had apprehended. There were evidences, also, of the haste with which the British had retreated—five pieces of ordnance with their trunnions knocked off; others hastily spiked; others thrown off the wharf. "General Howe's retreat," writes Washington, "was precipitate beyond anything I could have conceived. The destruction of the stores at Dunbar's camp, after Braddock's defeat, was but a faint image of what may be seen at Boston; artillery carts cut to pieces in one place, gun carriages in another; shells broke here, shots buried there, and everything carrying with it the face of disorder and confusion, as also of distress."[2]

To add to the mortification of General Howe, he received, we are told, while sailing out of the harbour, despatches from the ministry, approving the resolution he had so strenuously expressed, of maintaining his post until he should receive reinforcements.

As the small-pox prevailed in some parts of the town, precautions were taken by Washington for its purification;

[1] Iron balls, with four sharp points, to wound the feet of men or horses.

[2] Lee's Memoirs, p. 162.

and the main body of the army did not march in until the 20th. "The joy manifested in the countenances of the inhabitants," says an observer, "was overcast by the melancholy gloom caused by ten tedious months of siege;" but when, on the 22nd, the people from the country crowded into the town, "it was truly interesting," writes the same observer, to "witness the tender interviews and fond embraces of those who had been long separated under circumstances so peculiarly distressing."[1]

Notwithstanding the haste with which the British army was embarked, the fleet lingered for some days in Nantucket road. Apprehensive that the enemy, now that their forces were collected in one body, might attempt by some blow to retrieve their late disgrace, Washington hastily threw up works on Fort Hill, which commanded the harbour, and demolished those which protected the town from the neighbouring country. The fleet at length disappeared entirely from the coast, and the deliverance of Boston was assured.

The eminent services of Washington throughout this arduous siege, his admirable management, by which, "in the course of a few months, *an undisciplined band of husbandmen* became soldiers, and were enabled to invest, for nearly a year, and finally to expel a brave army of veterans, commanded by the most experienced generals," drew forth the enthusiastic applause of the nation. No higher illustration of this great achievement need be given, than the summary of it contained in the speech of a British statesman, the Duke of Manchester, in the House of Lords. "The army of Britain," said he, "equipped with every possible essential of war; a chosen army, with chosen officers, backed by the power of a mighty fleet, sent to correct revolted subjects; sent to chastise a resisting city; sent to assert Britain's authority;—has, for many tedious months, been imprisoned within that town by the Provincial army; who, their watchful guards, permitted them no inlet to the country; who braved all their efforts, and defied all their skill and ability in war could ever attempt. One way, indeed, of escape was left; the fleet

[1] Thacher's Mil. Journal, p. 50.

is yet respected; to the fleet the army has recourse; and British generals, whose name never met with a blot of dishonour, are forced to quit that town which was the first object of the war, the immediate cause of hostilities, the place of arms, which has cost this nation more than a million to defend."

We close this eventful chapter of Washington's history, with the honour decreed to him by the highest authority of his country. On motion of John Adams, who had first moved his nomination as commander-in-chief, a unanimous vote of thanks to him was passed in Congress; and it was ordered that a gold medal be struck, commemorating the evacuation of Boston, bearing the effigy of Washington as its deliverer.

CHAPTER LXI.

Destination of the Fleet—Commission of the Two Howes—Character of Lord Howe—The Colonies divided into Departments—Lee assigned to the Southern Department—General Thomas to Canada—Character of Lee, by Washington—Letters of Lee from the South—A Dog in a Dancing-school—Committee of Safety in Virginia—Lee's Grenadiers—Putnam in Command at New York—State of Affairs there—Arrival of Washington—New Arrangements—Perplexities with respect to Canada—England subsidizes Hessian Troops.

The British fleet, bearing the army from Boston, had disappeared from the coast. "Whither they are bound, and where they next will pitch their tents," writes Washington, "I know not." He conjectured their destination to be New York, and made his arrangements accordingly; but he was mistaken. General Howe had steered for Halifax, there to await the arrival of strong reinforcements from England, and the fleet of his brother, Admiral Lord Howe, who was to be commander-in-chief of the naval forces on the North American station.

It was thought that these brothers would co-operate admirably in the exercise of their relative functions on land and water. Yet they were widely different in their habits and dispositions. Sir William, easy, indolent, and self-indulgent, "hated business," we are told, "and never did any. Lord Howe loved it, dwelt upon it, never could leave it." Beside his nautical commands, he had been

treasurer of the navy, member of the board of admiralty, and had held a seat in Parliament; where, according to Walpole, he was "silent as a rock," excepting when naval affairs were under discussion, when he spoke briefly, and to the point. "My Lord Howe," said George III., "your life has been a continued series of services to your country." He was now about fifty-one years of age, tall and well-proportioned like his brother, but wanting his ease of deportment. His complexion was dark, his countenance grave and strongly marked, and he had a shy reserve, occasionally mistaken for haughtiness. As a naval officer he was esteemed resolute and enterprising, yet cool and firm. In his younger days he had contracted a friendship for Wolfe; "it was like the union of cannon and gunpowder," said Walpole. Howe, strong in mind, solid in judgment, firm of purpose, was said to be the cannon; Wolfe, quick in conception, prompt in execution, impetuous in action—the gunpowder.[1] The bravest man, we are told, could not wish for a more able or more gallant commander than Howe; and the sailors used to say of him, "Give us Black Dick, and we fear nothing."

Such is his lordship's portrait as sketched by English pencils; we shall see hereafter how far his conduct conforms to it; at present, we must consider the state of the American army, in the appointments and commands of which various changes had recently taken place.

It was presumed the enemy, in the ensuing campaign, would direct their operations against the middle and southern colonies. Congress divided those colonies into two departments: one, comprehending New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, was to be under the command of a major-general and two brigadier-generals; the other, comprising Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, to be under the command of a major-general and four brigadiers.

In this new arrangement, the orders destining General Lee to Canada were superseded, and he was appointed to the command of the southern department, where he was to keep watch upon the movements of Sir Henry Clinton.

[1] Barrow's life of Earl Howe, p. 400.

He was somewhat dissatisfied with the change in his destination. "As I am the only general officer on the continent," writes he to Washington, "who can speak or think in French, I confess I think it would have been more prudent to have sent me to Canada; but I shall obey with alacrity, and I hope with success."

In reply, Washington observes, "I was just about to congratulate you on your appointment to the command in Canada, when I received the account that your destination was altered. As a Virginian, I must rejoice at the change, but as an American, I think you would have done more essential service to the common cause in Canada. For, besides the advantage of speaking and thinking in French, an officer who is acquainted with their manners and customs, and has travelled in their country, must certainly take the strongest hold of their affection and confidence."

The command in Canada was given to General Thomas, who had distinguished himself at Roxbury, and was promoted to the rank of major-general. It would have been given to Schuyler but for the infirm state of his health; still Congress expressed a reliance on his efforts to complete the work "so conspicuously begun and well conducted" under his orders, in the last campaign; and, as not merely the success, but the very existence of the army in Canada would depend on supplies sent from these colonies across the lakes, he was required, until further orders, to fix his head-quarters at Albany, where, without being exposed to the fatigue of the camp, until his health was perfectly restored, he would be in a situation to forward supplies, to superintend the operations necessary for the defence of New York and the Hudson River, and the affairs of the whole middle department.

Lee set out for the South on the 7th of March, carrying with him his bold spirit, his shrewd sagacity, and his whimsical and splenetic humours. The following admirably impartial sketch is given of him by Washington, in a letter to his brother Augustine: "He is the first in military knowledge and experience we have in the whole army. He is zealously attached to the cause; honest and well meaning, but rather fickle and violent, I fear, in his

temper. However, as he possesses an uncommon share of good sense and spirit, I congratulate my countrymen on his appointment to that department."[1]

We give by anticipation a few passages from Lee's letters, illustrative of his character and career. The news of the evacuation of Boston reached him in Virginia. In a letter to Washington, dated Williamsburg, April 5, he expresses himself on the subject with generous warmth. "My dear general," writes he, "I most sincerely congratulate you; I congratulate the public on the great and glorious event, your possession of Boston. It will be a most bright page in the annals of America, and a most abominable black one in those of the beldam Britain. Go on, my dear general; crown yourself with glory, and establish the liberties and lustre of your country on a foundation more permanent than the Capitol rock."

Then reverting to himself, his subacid humours work up, and he shows that he had been as much annoyed in Williamsburg, by the interference of committees, as he had been in New York. "My situation," writes he, "is just as I expected. I am afraid I shall make a shabby figure, without any real demerits of my own. I am like a dog in a dancing-school; I know not where to turn myself, where to fix myself. The circumstances of the country, intersected with navigable rivers; the uncertainty of the enemy's designs and motions, who can fly in an instant to any spot they choose, with their canvas wings, throw me, or would throw Julius Cæsar, into this inevitable dilemma: I may possibly be in the North, when, as Richard says, I should serve my sovereign in the West. I can only act from surmise, and have a very good chance of surmising wrong. I am sorry to grate your ears with a truth, but must, at all events, assure you, that the Provincial Congress of New York are angels of decision, when compared with your countrymen, the committee of safety, assembled at Williamsburg. Page, Lee, Mercer, and Payne, are, indeed, exceptions; but from Pendleton, Bland, the Treasurer and Co.—*Libera nos Domine!*"

Lee's letters from Virginia, written at a later date, were

[1] Force's Am. Archives, 4th Series, v. 562.

in a better humour. "There is a noble spirit in this province pervading all orders of men; if the same becomes universal, we shall be saved. I am, fortunately for my own happiness, and, I think, for the well-being of the community, on the best terms with the senatorial part, as well as the people at large. I shall endeavour to preserve their confidence and good opinion."[1]

And in a letter to Washington:—

"I have formed two companies of grenadiers to each regiment, and with spears thirteen feet long. Their rifles (for they are all riflemen) sling over their shoulders, their appearance is formidable, and the men are conciliated to the weapon. * * * I am likewise furnishing myself with four-ounced rifled amusettes, which will carry an infernal distance; the two-ounced hit a half sheet of paper, at five hundred yards distance."

On Lee's departure for the South, Brigadier-general Lord Stirling had remained in temporary command at New York. Washington, however, presuming that the British fleet had steered for that port, with the force which had evacuated Boston, hastened detachments thither under Generals Heath and Sullivan, and wrote for three thousand additional men to be furnished by Connecticut. The command of the whole he gave to General Putnam, who was ordered to fortify the city and the passes of the Hudson, according to the plans of General Lee. In the mean time, Washington delayed to come on himself, until he should have pushed forward the main body of his army by divisions.

Lee's anticipations that laxity and confusion would prevail after his departure were not realized. The veteran Putnam, on taking command, put the city under rigorous military rule. The soldiers were to retire to their barracks and quarters at the beating of the tattoo, and remain there until the reveille in the morning. The inhabitants were subjected to the same rule. None would be permitted to pass a sentry, without the countersign, which would be furnished to them on applying to any of the brigade majors. All communication between the "ministerial fleet" and shore was stopped; the ships were no longer to be fur-

[1] Force's Am. Archives, 4th Series, vol. v. 792.

nished with provisions. Any person taken in the act of holding communication with them would be considered an enemy, and treated accordingly.

We have a lively picture of the state of the city, in letters written at the time, and already cited. "When you are informed that New York is deserted by its old inhabitants, and filled with soldiers from New England, Philadelphia, Jersey, &c., you will naturally conclude the environs of it are not very safe from so undisciplined a multitude as our Provincials are represented to be; but I do believe there are very few instances of so great a number of men together, with so little mischief done by them. They have all the simplicity of ploughmen in their manners, and seem quite strangers to the vices of older soldiers: they have been employed in erecting fortifications in every part of the town. * * * Governor Tryon loses his credit with the people here prodigiously; he has lately issued a proclamation, desiring the deluded people of this colony to return to their obedience, promising a speedy support to the friends of government, declaring a door of mercy open to the penitent, and a rod for the disobedient, &c. The friends of government were provoked at being so distinguished, and the friends to liberty hung him in effigy, and printed a dying speech for him. A letter, too, was intercepted from him, hastening Lord Howe to New York, as the rebels were fortifying. These have entirely lost him the good will of the people. * * * You cannot think how sorry I am the governor has so lost himself, a man once so much beloved. O Lucifer, once the son of morn, how fallen! General Washington is expected hourly; General Putnam is here, with several other generals, and some of their ladies. * * * The variety of reports keeps one's mind always in agitation. Clinton and Howe have set the continent a racing from Boston to Carolina. Clinton came into our harbour; away flew the women, children, goods, and chattels, and in came the soldiers flocking from every part. No sooner was it known that he was not going to land here, than expresses were sent to Virginia and Carolina, to put them on their guard; his next expedition was to Virginia; there they were ready to receive him; from thence, without attempting to land, he sailed

to Carolina. Now General Howe is leading us another dance."[1]

Washington came on by the way of Providence, Norwich, and New London, expediting the embarkation of troops from these posts, and arrived at New York, on the 13th of April. Many of the works which Lee had commenced were by this time finished; others were in progress. It was apprehended the principal operations of the enemy would be on Long Island, the high grounds of which, in the neighbourhood of Brooklyn, commanded the city. Washington saw that an able and efficient officer was needed at that place. Greene was accordingly stationed there with a division of the army. He immediately proceeded to complete the fortifications of that important post, and to make himself acquainted with the topography, and the defensive points of the surrounding country.

The aggregate force distributed at several extensive posts in New York and its environs, and on Long Island, Staten Island, and elsewhere, amounted to little more than ten thousand men; some of those were on the sick list, others absent on command or on furlough; there were but about eight thousand available and fit for duty. These, too, were without pay; those recently enlisted without arms, and no one could say where arms were to be procured.

Washington saw the inadequacy of the force to the purposes required, and was full of solicitude about the security of a place, the central point of the confederacy, and the grand deposit of ordnance and military stores. He was aware, too, of the disaffection to the cause among many of the inhabitants, and apprehensive of treachery. The process of fortifying the place had induced the ships of war to fall down into the outer bay, within the Hook, upwards of twenty miles from the city; but Governor Tryon was still on board of one of them, keeping up an active correspondence with the Tories on Staten and Long Islands, and in other parts of the neighbourhood.

Washington took an early occasion to address an urgent letter to the Committee of Safety, pointing out the dangerous, and even treasonable, nature of this correspondence.

[1] Remembrancer, vol. iii. p. 85.

He had more weight and influence with that body than had been possessed by General Lee, and procured the passage of a resolution prohibiting, under severe penalties, all intercourse with the king's ships.

Head-quarters, at this time, was a scene of incessant toil on the part of the commander-in-chief, his secretaries and aides-de-camp. "I give in to no kind of amusements myself," writes he, "and consequently those about me can have none, but are confined from morning until evening, hearing and answering applications and letters." The presence of Mrs. Washington was a solace in the midst of these stern military cares, and diffused a feminine grace and decorum, and a cheerful spirit over the domestic arrangements of head-quarters, where everything was conducted with simplicity and dignity. The wives of some of the other generals and officers rallied round Mrs. Washington; but social intercourse was generally at an end. "We all live here," writes a lady of New York, "like nuns shut up in a nunnery. No society with the town, for there are none there to visit; neither can we go in or out after a certain hour without the countersign."

In addition to his cares about the security of New York, Washington had to provide for the perilous exigencies of the army in Canada. Since his arrival in the city, four regiments of troops, a company of riflemen and another of artificers, had been detached under the command of Brigadier-general Thompson, and a further corps of six regiments under Brigadier-general Sullivan, with orders to join General Thomas as soon as possible.

Still Congress inquired of him whether further reinforcements to the army in Canada would not be necessary, and whether they could be spared from the army in New York. His reply shows the peculiar perplexities of his situation, and the tormenting uncertainty in which he was kept, as to where the next storm of war would break. "With respect to sending more troops to that country, I am really at a loss what to advise, as it is impossible at present to know the designs of the enemy. Should they send the whole force under General Howe up the river St. Lawrence to relieve Quebec and recover Canada, the troops gone and now going will be insufficient to stop their progress; and,

should they think proper to send that, or an equal force, this way from Great Britain, for the purpose of possessing this city and securing the navigation of Hudson's River, the troops left here will not be sufficient to oppose them; and yet, for anything we know, I think it not improbable they may attempt both, both being of the greatest importance to them if they have men. I could wish, indeed, that the army in Canada should be more powerfully reinforced; at the same time I am conscious that the trusting of this important post, which is now become the grand magazine of America, to the handful of men remaining here, is running too great a risk. The securing of this post and Hudson's River is to us also of so great importance, that I cannot at present advise the sending any more troops from hence; on the contrary, the general officers now here, whom I thought it my duty to consult, think it absolutely necessary to increase the army at this place with at least ten thousand men; especially when it is considered, that from this place only the army in Canada must draw its supplies of ammunition, provisions, and most probably of men."

Washington at that time was not aware of the extraordinary expedients England had recently resorted to against the next campaign. The Duke of Brunswick, the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, and the Hereditary Prince of Cassel, Count of Hanau, had been subsidised to furnish troops to assist in the subjugation of her colonies. Four thousand three hundred Brunswick troops, and nearly thirteen thousand Hessians, had entered the British service. Beside the subsidy exacted by the German princes, they were to be paid seven pounds four shillings and fourpence sterling for every soldier furnished by them, and as much more for every one slain.

Of this notable arrangement Washington, as we observed, was not yet aware. "The designs of the enemy," writes he, "are too much behind the curtain for me to form any accurate opinion of their plan of operations for the summer's campaign. We are left to wander, therefore, in the field of conjecture."[1]

[1] Letter to the President of Congress, 5th May.

Within a few days afterwards he had vague accounts of "Hessians and Hanoverian troops coming over;" but it was not until the 17th of May, when he received letters from General Schuyler, inclosing others from the commanders in Canada, that he knew in what direction some of these bolts of war were launched; and this calls for some further particulars of the campaign on the banks of the St. Lawrence, which we shall give to the reader in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER LXII.

Arnold blockades Quebec—His Difficulties—Arrival of General Wooster—Of General Thomas—Abortive Attempt on Quebec—Preparations for Retreat—Sortie of Carleton—Retreat of the Americans—Halt at Point Deschambault—Alarm in the Colonies at the Retreat of the Army—Popular Clamour against Schuyler—Slanders refuted.

In a former chapter, we left Arnold before the walls of Quebec, wounded, crippled, almost disabled, yet not disheartened; blockading that "proud town" with a force inferior, by half, in number to that of the garrison. For his gallant services, Congress promoted him in January to the rank of brigadier-general.

Throughout the winter he kept up the blockade with his shattered army; though had Carleton ventured upon a sortie, he might have been forced to decamp. That cautious general, however, remained within his walls. He was sure of reinforcements from England in the spring, and, in the mean time, trusted to the elements of dissolution at work in the besieging army.

Arnold, in truth, had difficulties of all kinds to contend with. His military chest was exhausted; his troops were in want of necessaries; to procure supplies, he was compelled to resort to the paper money issued by Congress, which was uncurrent among the Canadians; he issued a proclamation making the refusal to take it in payment a penal offence. This only produced irritation and disgust. As the terms of their enlistment expired, his men claimed their discharge and returned home. Sickness also thinned his ranks; so that, at one time, his force was reduced to

five hundred men, and for two months, with all his recruitments of raw militia, did not exceed seven hundred.

The failure of the attack on Quebec had weakened the cause among the Canadians; the peasantry had been displeased by the conduct of the American troops; they had once welcomed them as deliverers; they now began to regard them as intruders. The seigneurs, or noblesse, also, feared to give further countenance to an invasion which, if defeated, might involve them in ruin.

Notwithstanding all these discouragements, Arnold still kept up a bold face; cut off supplies occasionally, and harassed the place with alarms. Having repaired his batteries, he opened a fire upon the town, but with little effect; the best part of the artillerists, with Lamb, their capable commander, were prisoners within the walls.

On the 1st day of April, General Wooster arrived from Montreal, with reinforcements, and took the command. The day after his arrival, Arnold, by the falling of his horse, again received an injury on the leg recently wounded, and was disabled for upwards of a week. Considering himself slighted by General Wooster, who did not consult him in military affairs, he obtained leave of absence until he should be recovered from his lameness, and repaired to Montreal, where he took command.

General Thomas arrived at the camp in the course of April, and found the army in a forlorn condition, scattered at different posts, and on the island of Orleans. It was numerically increased to upwards of two thousand men, but several hundred were unfit for service. The small-pox had made great ravages. They had inoculated each other. In their sick and debilitated state, they were without barracks, and almost without medicine. A portion, whose term of enlistment had expired, refused to do duty, and clamoured for their discharge.

The winter was over, the river was breaking up, reinforcements to the garrison might immediately be expected, and then the case would be desperate. Observing that the river about Quebec was clear of ice, General Thomas determined on a bold effort. It was, to send up a fire-ship with the flood, and, while the ships in the harbour were in flames, and the town in confusion, to scale the walls.

Accordingly, on the third of May, the troops turned out with scaling ladders; the fire-ship came up the river under easy sail, and arrived near the shipping before it was discovered. It was fired into. The crew applied a slow match to the train and pulled off. The ship was soon in a blaze, but the flames caught and consumed the sails; her way was checked, and she drifted off harmlessly with the ebbing tide. The rest of the plan was, of course, abandoned.

Nothing now remained but to retreat before the enemy should be reinforced. Preparations were made in all haste to embark the sick and the military stores. While this was taking place, five ships made their way into the harbour, on the 6th of May, and began to land troops. Thus reinforced, General Carleton sallied forth, with eight hundred or a thousand men. We quote his own letter for an account of his sortie. "As soon as part of the 29th regiment, with the marines, in all about two hundred, were landed, they, with the greatest part of the garrison, by this time much improved, and in high spirits, marched out of the ports of St. Louis and St. Johns to see what these mighty boasters were about. They were found very busy in their preparations for a retreat. A few shots being exchanged, the line marched forward, and the place was soon cleared of these plunderers."

By his own account, however, these "mighty boasters" had held him and his garrison closely invested for five months; had burnt the suburbs; battered the walls; thrown red-hot shot among the shipping; made repeated and daring attempts to carry the place by assault and stratagem, and rendered it necessary for soldiers, sailors, marines, and even judges and other civil officers to mount guard.[1] One officer declares, in a letter, that for eighty successive nights he slept in his clothes, to be ready in case of alarm.

All this, too, was effected by a handful of men, exposed in open encampments to the rigours of a Canadian winter. If in truth they were boasters, it must be allowed their deeds were equal to their words.

The Americans were in no condition to withstand

[1] Carleton to Lord George Germaine, May 14.

Carleton's unlooked-for attack. They had no intrenchments, and could not muster three hundred men at any point. A precipitate retreat was the consequence, in which baggage, artillery, everything was abandoned. Even the sick were left behind; many of whom crawled away from the camp hospitals, and took refuge in the woods, or among the Canadian peasantry.

General Carleton did not think it prudent to engage in a pursuit with his newly-landed troops. He treated the prisoners with great humanity, and caused the sick to be sought out in their hiding-places, and brought to the general hospitals; with assurances, that, when healed, they should have liberty to return to their homes.

General Thomas came to a halt at Point Deschambault, about sixty miles above Quebec, and called a council of war to consider what was to be done. The enemy's ships were hastening up the St. Lawrence; some were already but two or three leagues distant. The camp was without cannon; powder, forwarded by General Schuyler, had fallen into the enemy's hands; there were not provisions enough to subsist the army for more than two or three days; the men-of-war, too, might run up the river, intercept all their resources, and reduce them to the same extremity they had experienced before Quebec. It was resolved, therefore, to ascend the river still further.

General Thomas, however, determined to send forward the invalids, but to remain at Point Deschambault with about five hundred men, until he should receive orders from Montreal, and learn whether such supplies could be forwarded immediately as would enable him to defend his position.[1]

The despatches of General Thomas, setting forth the disastrous state of affairs, had a disheartening effect on Schuyler, who feared the army would be obliged to abandon Canada. Washington, on the contrary, spoke cheeringly on the subject. "We must not despair. A manly and spirited opposition only can insure success, and prevent the enemy from improving the advantage they have obtained."[2]

[1] General Thomas to Washington, May 8.
[2] Washington to Schuyler, May 17.

He regretted that the troops had not been able to make a stand at Point Deschambault, but hoped they would maintain a post as far down the river as possible. The lower it was, the more important would be the advantages resulting from it, as all the country above would be favourable, and furnish assistance and support; while all below would necessarily be in the power of the enemy.

The tidings of the reverses in Canada, and the retreat of the American army, had spread consternation throughout the New Hampshire Grants, and the New England frontiers, which would now be laid open to invasion. Committees of towns and districts assembled in various places, to consult on the alarming state of affairs. In a time of adversity, it relieves the public mind to have some individual on whom to charge its disasters. General Schuyler, at present, was to be the victim. We have already noticed the prejudice and ill-will, on the part of the New England people, which had harassed him throughout the campaign, and nearly driven him from the service. His enemies now stigmatised him as the cause of the late reverses. He had neglected, they said, to forward reinforcements and supplies to the army in Canada. His magnanimity in suffering Sir John Johnson to go at large, while in his power, was again misconstrued into a crime: he had thus enabled that dangerous man to renew his hostilities. Finally, it was insinuated that he was untrue to his country, if not positively leagued with her enemies.

These imputations were not generally advanced, and when advanced, were not generally countenanced; but a committee of King's County appears to have given them credence, addressing a letter to the commander-in-chief on the subject, accompanied by documents.

Washington, to whom Schuyler's heart had been laid open throughout all its trials, and who knew its rectitude, received the letter and documents with indignation and disgust, and sent copies of them to the general. "From these," said he, "you will readily discover the diabolical and insidious arts and schemes carrying on by the Tories and friends of government to raise distrust, dissensions, and divisions among us. Having the utmost confidence in your integrity, and the most incontestable proof of your

great attachment to our common country and its interest, I could not but look upon the charge against you with an eye of disbelief, and sentiments of detestation and abhorrence; nor should I have troubled you with the matter, had I not been informed that copies were sent to different committees, and to Governor Trumbull, which I conceived would get abroad, and that you, should you find I had been furnished with them, would consider my suppressing them as an evidence of my belief, or at best of my doubts, of the charges."[1]

We will go forward and give the sequel of this matter. While the imputations in question had merely floated in public rumour, Schuyler had taken no notice of them; "but it is now," writes he in reply to Washington, "a duty which I owe myself and my country, to detect the scoundrels, and the only means of doing this is by requesting that an immediate inquiry be made into the matter; when I trust it will appear that it was more a scheme calculated to ruin me, than to disunite and create jealousies in the friends of America. Your Excellency will, therefore, please to order a court of inquiry the soonest possible; for I cannot sit easy under such an infamous imputation; since on this extensive continent, numbers of the most respectable characters may not know what your Excellency and Congress do of my principles and exertions in the common cause."

He further adds: "I am informed by persons of good credit, that about one hundred persons, living on what are commonly called the New Hampshire Grants, have had a design to seize me as a Tory, and perhaps still have. There never was a man so infamously scandalized and ill-treated as I am."

We need only add, that the Berkshire committees, which, in a time of agitation and alarm, had hastily given countenance to these imputations, investigated them deliberately in their cooler moments, and acknowledged, in a letter to Washington, that they were satisfied their suspicions respecting General Schuyler were wholly groundless. 'We sincerely hope," added they, "his name may

[1] Washington to Schuyler, May 21.

be handed down, with immortal honour, to the latest posterity, as one of the great pillars of the American cause."

CHAPTER LXIII.

Gates sent to Philadelphia with the Canada Despatches—Promoted to the rank of Major-General—Washington summoned to Philadelphia—Putnam left in Command—Conference with Congress—Army Arrangements—A Board of War instituted—The Clintons of New York.

As the reverses in Canada would affect the fortunes of the Revolution elsewhere, Washington sent General Gates to lay the despatches concerning them before Congress. "His military experience," said he, "and intimate acquaintance with the situation of our affairs, will enable him to give Congress the fullest satisfaction about the measures necessary to be adopted at this alarming crisis; and, with his zeal and attachment to the cause of America, he will have a claim to their notice and favours."

Scarce had Gates departed on his mission (May 19th), when Washington himself received a summons to Philadelphia, to advise with Congress concerning the opening campaign. He was informed also that Gates, on the 16th of May, had been promoted to the rank of major-general, and Mifflin to that of brigadier-general, and a wish was intimated that they might take the command of Boston.

Washington prepared to proceed to Philadelphia. His general orders issued on the 19th of May, show the anxious situation of affairs at New York. In case of an alarm, the respective regiments were to draw up opposite to their encampments or quarters, until ordered to repair to the alarm posts. The alarm signals for regulars, militia, and the inhabitants of the city, were, in the day-time—two cannon fired from the rampart at Fort George, and a flag hoisted on the top of Washington's head-quarters. In the night—two cannon fired as above, and two lighted lanterns hoisted on the top of head-quarters.[1]

[1] The following statement of the batteries at New York, we find dated May 22nd.

The *Grand Battery*, on the south part of the town.
Fort George, immediately above it.

In his parting instructions to Putnam, who, as the oldest major-general in the city, would have the command during his absence, Washington informed him of the intention of the Provincial Congress of New York to seize the principal Tories, and disaffected persons in the city, and the surrounding country, especially on Long Island, and authorized him to afford military aid, if required, to carry the same into execution. He was also to send Lord Stirling, Colonel Putnam, the engineer, and Colonel Knox, if he could be spared, up to the Highlands, to examine the state of the forts and garrisons, and report what was necessary to put them in a posture of defence. Their garrisons were chiefly composed of parts of a regiment of New York troops, commanded by Colonel James Clinton, of Ulster County, and were said to be sufficient.

The general, accompanied by Mrs. Washington, departed from New York on the 21st of May, and they were invited by Mr. Hancock, the President of Congress, to be his guests during their sojourn at Philadelphia.

Lee, when he heard of Washington's visit there, augured good effects from it. "I am extremely glad, dear general," writes he, "that you are in Philadelphia, for their councils sometimes lack a little of military electricity."

Washington, in his conferences with Congress, appears to have furnished this electricity. He roundly expressed his conviction, that no accommodation could be effected with Great Britain, on acceptable terms. Ministerialists had declared in Parliament, that, the sword being drawn, the most coercive measures would be persevered in, until there was complete submission. The recent subsidizing of foreign troops was a part of this policy, and indicated unsparing hostility. A protracted war, therefore, was inevitable; but it would be impossible to carry it on

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White Hall Battery, on the left of the Grand Battery.
Oyster Battery, behind General Washington's head-quarters.
Grenadier Battery, near the Brewhouse on the North River.
Jersey Battery, on the left of the Grenadier Battery.
Bayard's Hill Redoubt, on Bayard's Hill.
Spencer's Redoubt, on the hill where his brigade is encamped.
Waterbury's Battery (fascines), on a wharf below this hill.
Badlam's Redoubt, on a hill near the Jews' burying-ground.

successfully, with the scanty force actually embodied, and with transient enlistments of militia.

In consequence of his representations, resolutions were passed in Congress that soldiers should be enlisted for three years, with a bounty of ten dollars for each recruit; that the army at New York should be reinforced until the 1st December, with thirteen thousand eight hundred militia; that gondolas and fire-rafts should be built, to prevent the men-of-war and enemy's ships from coming into New York Bay, or the Narrows; and that a flying camp of ten thousand militia, furnished by Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, and likewise engaged until the 1st December, should be stationed in the Jerseys for the defence of the middle colonies. Washington was, moreover, empowered, in case of emergency, to call on the neighbouring colonies for temporary aid with their militia.

Another important result of his conferences with Congress was the establishment of a war office. Military affairs had hitherto been referred in Congress to committees casually appointed, and had consequently been subject to great irregularity and neglect. Henceforth a permanent committee, entitled the Board of War and Ordnance, was to take cognizance of them. The first Board was composed of five members: John Adams, Colonel Benjamin Harrison, Roger Sherman, James Wilson, and Edward Rutledge; with Richard Peters as secretary. It went into operation on the 12th of June.

While at Philadelphia, Washington had frequent consultations with George Clinton, one of the delegates from New York, concerning the interior defences of that province, especially those connected with the security of the Highlands of the Hudson, where part of the regiment of Colonel James Clinton, the brother of the delegate, was stationed. The important part which these brothers were soon to act in the military affairs of that province, and ultimately in its political history, entitles them to a special notice.

They were of the old Clinton stock of England, being descended from General James Clinton, an adherent of royalty in the time of the civil wars, but who passed over to Ireland after the death of Charles I. Their father

Charles Clinton, grandson of the general, emigrated to America in 1729, and settled in Ulster, now Orange County, just above the Highlands of the Hudson. Though not more than fifty miles from the city of New York, it was at that time on the borders of a wilderness, where every house had at times to be a fortress. Charles Clinton, like most men on our savage frontier in those days, was a warrior by necessity, if not by choice. He took an active part in Indian and French wars, commanded a provincial regiment stationed at Fort Herkimer, joined in the expedition under General Bradstreet, when it passed up the valley of the Mohawk, and was present at the capture of Fort Frontenac. His sons, James and George, one twenty, the other seventeen years of age, served in the same campaign, the one as captain, the other as lieutenant; thus taking an early lesson in that school of American soldiers, the French war.

James, whose propensities were always military, continued in the provincial army until the close of that war; and afterwards, when settled on an estate in Ulster County, was able and active in organizing its militia. George applied himself to the law, and became successful at the bar, in the same county. Their father, having laid aside the sword, occupied for many years, with discernment and integrity, the honourable station of Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. He died in Ulster County, in 1773, in the eighty-third year of his age, "in full view of that revolution in which his sons were to act distinguished parts." With his latest breath he charged them "to stand by the liberties of their country."

They needed no such admonition. From the very first they had been heart and hand in the cause. George had championed it for years in the New York legislature, signalizing himself by his zeal as one of an intrepid minority in opposing ministerial oppression. He had but recently taken his seat as delegate to the Continental Congress.

James Clinton, appointed colonel on the 30th of June, 1775, had served with his regiment of New York troops under Montgomery, at the siege of St. Johns, and the capture of Montreal, after which he had returned home. He had subsequently been appointed to the command of a

regiment in one of the four battalions raised for the defence of New York. We shall soon have occasion to speak further of these patriot brothers.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Affairs in Canada—Disaster at the Cedars—Hostile Designs of the Johnsons—A bloody Summer expected—Forts in the Highlands—Colonel James Clinton in command—Fortifications at King's Bridge and on Long Island.

Despatches from Canada continued to be disastrous. General Arnold, who was in command at Montreal, had established a post on the St. Lawrance, about forty miles above that place, on a point of land called the Cedars, where he had stationed Colonel Bedel, with about four hundred men, to prevent goods being sent to the enemy in the upper country, and to guard against surprise from them or their Indians.

In the latter part of May, Colonel Bedel received intelligence that a large body of British, Canadians, and Indians, under the command of Captain Forster, were coming down from Oswegatchie to attack him. Leaving Major Butterfield in command of the post, he hastened down to Montreal to obtain reinforcements. Arnold immediately detached one hundred men under Major Sherburne, and prepared to follow in person with a much greater force. In the mean time the post at the Cedars had been besieged, and Major Butterfield intimidated into a surrender, by a threat from Captain Forster that resistance would provoke a massacre of his whole garrison by the Indians. The reinforcements under Major Sherburne were assailed within four miles of the Cedars, by a large party of savages, and captured after a sharp skirmish, in which several were killed on both sides.

Arnold received word of these disasters while on the march. He instantly sent forward some Caughnawaga Indians, to overtake the savages and demand a surrender of the prisoners; with a threat that, in case of a refusal, and that any of them were murdered, he would sacrifice every Indian who fell into his hands, and would follow the offenders to their towns and destroy them by fire and

sword. He now embarked four hundred of his men in bateaux, and pushed on with the remainder by land. Arriving at St. Ann's, above the rapids of the St. Lawrence, he discovered several of the enemy's bateaux, taking the prisoners off from an island, a league distant. It was a tormenting sight, as it was not in his power to relieve them. His bateaux were a league behind, coming up the rapids very slowly. He sent several expresses to hurry them. It was sunset before they arrived and he could embark all his people; in the mean time, his Caughnawaga messengers returned with an answer from the savages. They had five hundred prisoners collected together, they said, at Quinze Chiens, where they were posted; should he offer to land and attack them, they would kill every prisoner, and give no quarter to any who should fall into their hands thereafter.

"Words cannot express my feelings," writes Arnold, "at the delivery of this message. Torn by the conflicting passions of revenge and humanity; a sufficient force to take ample revenge, raging for action, urged me on one hand; and humanity for five hundred unhappy wretches, who were on the point of being sacrificed if our vengeance was not delayed, pleaded equally strong on the other." In this situation, he ordered the boats to row immediately for the island, where he had seen the enemy taking their prisoners. Before he reached it the savages had conveyed them all away, excepting five whom he found naked, and almost starved, and one or two who, being unwell, they had butchered. Arnold now pushed for Quinze Chiens, about four miles distant, on the mainland. Here was the whole force of the enemy, civilized and savage, intrenched and fortified. As Arnold approached, they opened a fire upon his boats with small arms and two brass six-pounders. He rowed near the land without returning a shot. By this time it was too dark to distinguish anything on shore, and being unacquainted with the ground, he judged it prudent to return to St. Johns.

Here he called a council of war, and it was determined to attack the enemy early in the morning. In the course of the night a flag was sent by Captain Forster, with articles for an exchange of prisoners, which had been entered

into by him and Major Sherburne. As the terms were not equal they were objected to by Arnold, and a day passed before they were adjusted. A cartel was then signed, by which the prisoners, consisting of two majors, nine captains, twenty subalterns, and four hundred and forty-three privates, were to be exchanged for an equal number of British prisoners of the same rank, and were to be sent to the south shore of the St. Lawrence, near Caughnawaga, whence to return to their homes. Nine days were allowed for the delivery of the prisoners, during which time hostilities should be suspended.

Arnold, in a letter to the commissioners of Congress, then at Montreal, giving an account of this arrangement, expressed his indignation at the conduct of the king's officers, in employing savages to screen their butcheries, and suffering their prisoners to be killed in cold blood. "I intend being with you this evening," added he, "to consult on some effectual measures to take with these savages, and still more savage British troops, who are still at Quinze Chiens. As soon as our prisoners are released, I hope it will be in our power to take ample vengeance, or nobly fall in the attempt."[1]

The accounts which reached Washington of these affairs were vague and imperfect, and kept him for some days in painful suspense. The disasters at the Cedars were attributed entirely to the base and cowardly conduct of Bedel and Butterworth, and he wrote to Schuyler to have good courts appointed, and bring them, and every other officer guilty of misconduct, to trial.

"The situation of our affairs in Canada," observes he, "is truly alarming. I sincerely wish the next letters from the northward may not contain the melancholy advices of General Arnold's defeat, and the loss of Montreal. The most vigorous exertions will be necessary to retrieve our circumstances there, and I hope you will strain every nerve for that purpose. Unless it can be done now, Canada will be lost to us for ever."

While his mind was agitated by these concerns, letters from Schuyler showed that mischief was brewing in another quarter.

[1] Arnold to the Commis. of Cong. 27th May.

Colonel Guy Johnson, accompanied by the Sachem Brant and the Butlers, had been holding councils with the Indians, and designed, it was said, to come back to the Mohawk country, at the head of a Brttish and savage force. A correspondence was carried on between him and his cousin, Sir John Johnson, who was said to be preparing to co-operate with his Scotch dependents and Indian allies.

Considering this a breach of Sir John's parole, Schuyler had sent Colonel Elias Dayton with a force to apprehend him. Sir John, with a number of his armed tenants, retreated for refuge among the Indians, on the borders of the lakes. Dayton took temporary possession of Johnson Hall, placed guards about it, seized upon Sir John's papers, and read them in presence of Lady Johnson, and subsequently conveyed her ladyship as a kind of hostage to Albany.

Shortly afterwards came further intelligence of the designs of the Johnsons. Sir John, with his Scotch warriors and Indian allies, was said to be actually coming down the valley of the Mohawk, bent on revenge, and prepared to lay everything waste; and Schuyler collecting a force at Albany to oppose him. Washington instantly wrote to Schuyler, to detach Colonel Dayton with his regiment on that service, with instructions to secure a post where Fort Stanwix formerly stood, in the time of the French war. As to Schuyler himself, Washington, on his own responsibility, directed him to hold a conference with the Six Nations, and with any others whom he and his brother commissioners on Indian affairs might think necessary, and secure their active services without waiting further directions from Congress; that body having recently resolved to employ Indian allies in the war, the enemy having set the example.

"We expect a bloody summer in New York and Canada," writes Washington to his brother Augustine, "and I am sorry to say that we are not, either in men or arms, prepared for it. However, it is to be hoped, that, if our cause is just, as I most religiously believe it, the same Providence which has in many instances appeared for us, will still go on to afford its aid."

Lord Stirling, who, by Washington's orders, had visited and inspected the defences in the Highlands, rendered a report of their condition, of which we give the purport. Fort Montgomery, at the lower part of the Highlands, was on the west bank of the river, north of Dunderberg (or Thunder Hill). It was situated on a bank one hundred feet high. The river at that place was about half a mile wide. Opposite the fort was the promontory of Anthony's Nose, many hundred feet high, accessible only to goats, or men expert in climbing. A body of riflemen stationed here, might command the decks of vessels. Fort Montgomery appeared to Lord Stirling the proper place for a guard post.

Fort Constitution was about six miles higher up the river, on a rocky island of the same name, at a narrow strait where the Hudson, shouldered by precipices, makes a sudden bend round West Point. A redoubt, in the opinion of Lord Stirling, would be needed on the point, not only for the preservation of Fort Constitution, but for its own importance.

The garrison of that fort consisted of two companies of Colonel James Clinton's regiment, and Captain Wisner's company of minute-men, in all one hundred and sixty rank and file. Fort Montgomery was garrisoned by three companies of the same regiment, about two hundred rank and file. Both garrisons were miserably armed. The direction of the works of both forts was in the hands of commissioners appointed by the Provincial Congress of New York. The general command of the posts required to be adjusted. Several persons, accused of being "notorious Tories," had recently been sent into Fort Montgomery by the district committees of the counties of Albany, Dutchess, and Westchester, with directions to the commanding officer, to keep them at hard labour until their further order. They were employed upon the fortifications.

In view of all these circumstances, Washington, on the 14th of June, ordered Colonel James Clinton to take command of both posts, and of all the troops stationed at them. He seemed a fit custodian for them, having been a soldier from his youth, brought up on a frontier subject to Indian alarms and incursions, and acquainted with the strong points and fastnesses of the Highlands.

Kingsbridge, and the heights adjacent, considered by General Lee of the utmost importance to the communication between New York and the mainland, and to the security of the Hudson, were reconnoitred by Washington on horseback, about the middle of the month; ordering where works should be laid out. Breastworks were to be thrown up for the defence of the bridge, and an advanced work (subsequently called Fort Independence) was to be built beyond it, on a hill commanding Spyt den Duivel Creek, as that inlet of the Hudson is called, which links it with Harlaem River.

A strong work, intended as a kind of citadel, was to crown a rocky height between two and three miles south of the bridge, commanding the channel of the Hudson: and below it were to be redoubts on the banks of the river at Jeffrey's Point. In honour of the general, the citadel received the name of Fort Washington.

Colonel Rufus Putnam was the principal engineer, who had the direction of the works. General Mifflin encamped in their vicinity, with part of the two battalions from Pennsylvania, to be employed in their construction, aided by the militia.

While these preparations were made for the protection of the Hudson, the works about Brooklyn, on Long Island, were carried on with great activity, under the superintendence of General Greene. In a word, the utmost exertions were made at every point, to put the city, its environs, and the Hudson River, in a state of defence, before the arrival of another hostile armament.

CHAPTER LXV.

Retreat of General Thomas—His Death—General Sullivan in command—Scene on the Sorel—Sanguine expectations of Sullivan—Washington's opinion of Sullivan's Character—Gates appointed to the command in Canada—Reinforcements of the Enemy—Reverses—Thompson captured—Retreat of Sullivan—Close of the Invasion of Canada.

Operations in Canada were drawing to a disastrous close. General Thomas, finding it impossible to make a stand at Point Deschambault, had continued his retreat to the mouth of the Sorel, where he found General Thompson with

part of the troops detached by Washington from New York, who were making some preparations for defence. Shortly after his arrival he was taken ill with the smallpox, and removed to Chamblee. He had prohibited inoculation among his troops, because it put too many of their scanty number on the sick list; he probably fell a victim to his own prohibition, as he died of that malady on the 2nd of June.

On his death, General Sullivan, who had recently arrived with the main detachment of troops from New York, succeeded to the command; General Wooster having been recalled. He advanced immediately with his brigade to the mouth of the Sorel, where he found General Thompson with but very few troops to defend that post, having detached Colonel St. Clair, with six or seven hundred men, to Three Rivers, about fifty miles down the St. Lawrence, to give check to an advanced corps of the enemy of about eight hundred regulars and Canadians, under the veteran Scot, Colonel Maclean. In the mean time General Thompson, who was left with but two hundred men to defend his post, was sending off his sick and his heavy baggage, to be prepared for a retreat, if necessary. "It really was affecting," writes Sullivan to Washington, "to see the banks of the Sorel lined with men, women, and children, leaping and clapping their hands for joy, to see me arrive; it gave no less joy to General Thompson, who seemed to be wholly forsaken, and left to fight against an unequal force or retreat before them."

Sullivan proceeded forthwith to complete the works on the Sorel; in the mean time he detached General Thompson with additional troops to overtake St. Clair, and assume command of the whole party, which would then amount to two thousand men. He was by no means to attack the encampment at Three Rivers, unless there was great prospect of success, as his defeat might prove the total loss of Canada. "I have the highest opinion of the bravery and resolution of the troops you command," says Sullivan, in his instructions, "and doubt not but, under the direction of a kind Providence, you will open the way for our recovering that ground which former troops have so shamefully lost."

Sullivan's letter to Washington, written at the same

time, is full of sanguine anticipation. It was his fixed determination to gain post at Deschambault, and fortify it so as to make it inaccessible. "The enemy's ships are now above that place," writes he; "but if General Thompson succeeds at Three Rivers, I will soon remove the ships below Richelieu Falls, and after that approach Quebec as fast as possible.

"Our affairs here," adds he, "have taken a strange turn since our arrival. The Canadians are flocking by hundreds to take a part with us. The only reason of their disaffection was, because our exertions were so feeble that they doubted much of our success, and even of our ability to protect them.

"I venture to assure you and the Congress that I can in a few days reduce the army to order, and, with the assistance of a kind Providence, put a new face to our affairs here, which a few days since seemed almost impossible."

The letter of Sullivan gave Washington an unexpected gleam of sunshine. "Before it came to hand," writes he, in reply, "I almost dreaded to hear from Canada, as my advices seemed to promise nothing favourable, but rather further misfortunes. But I now hope that our affairs, from the confused, distracted, and almost forlorn state in which you found them, will change, and assume an aspect of order and success." Still his sagacious mind perceived a motive for this favourable colouring of affairs. Sullivan was aiming at the command in Canada; and Washington soberly weighed his merits for the appointment in a letter to the President of Congress. "He is active, spirited, and zealously attached to the cause. He has his wants, and he has his foibles. The latter are manifested in his little tincture of vanity, and in an over desire of being popular, which now and then lead him into embarrassments. His wants are common to us all. He wants experience to move upon a grand scale; for the limited and contracted knowledge which any of us have in military matters stands in very little stead." This want was overbalanced, on the part of General Sullivan, by sound judgment, some acquaintance with men and books, and an enterprising genius.

"As the security of Canada is of the last importance to the well-being of these colonies," adds Washington, "I

should like to know the sentiment of Congress respecting the nomination of any officer to that command. The character I have drawn of General Sullivan is just, according to my ideas of him. Congress will, therefore, determine upon the propriety of continuing him in Canada, or sending another, as they shall see fit."[1]

Scarce had Washington despatched this letter, when he received one from the President of Congress, dated the 18th of June, informing him that Major-general Gates had been appointed to command the forces in Canada, and requesting him to expedite his departure as soon as possible. The appointment of Gates has been attributed to the influence of the Eastern delegates, with whom he was a favourite; indeed, during his station at Boston he had been highly successful in cultivating the good graces of the New England people. He departed for his command on the 26th of June, vested with extraordinary powers for the regulation of affairs in that "distant, dangerous, and shifting scene." "I would fain hope," writes Washington, "his arrival there will give our affairs a complexion different from what they have worn for a long time past, and that many essential benefits will result from it."

Despatches just received from General Sullivan had given a different picture of affairs in Canada from that contained in his previous letter. In fact, when he wrote that letter he was ignorant of the actual force of the enemy in Canada, which had recently been augmented to about 13,000 men, several regiments having arrived from Ireland, one from England, another from General Howe, and a body of Brunswick troops under the Baron Reidesel. Of these, the greater part were on the way up from Quebec in divisions, by land and water, with Generals Carleton, Burgoyne, Philips, and Reidesel; while a considerable number under General Frazer had arrived at Three Rivers, and others, under General Nesbit, lay near them on board of transports.

Sullivan's despatch, dated on the 8th of June, at the mouth of the Sorel, began in his former sanguine vein, anticipating the success of General Thompson's expedition

[1] Washington to the President of Congress, July 12, 1776.

to Three Rivers. "He has proceeded in the manner proposed, and made his attack at daylight, for at that time a very heavy cannonading began, which lasted with some intervals to twelve o'clock. It is now near one P.M.; the firing has ceased, except some irregular firing with cannon at a considerable distance of time one from the other. At eight o'clock a very heavy firing of small-arms was heard even here, at the distance of forty-five miles. I am almost certain that victory has declared in our favour, as the irregular firing of the cannon for such a length of time after the small-arms ceased shows that our men are in possession of the ground."

The letter was kept open to give the particulars of this supposed victory; it closed with a dismal reverse. General Thompson had coasted in bateaux along the right bank of the river at that expanse called Lake St. Pierre, and arrived at Nicolete, where he found St. Clair and his detachment. He crossed the river in the night, and landed a few miles above Three Rivers, intending to surprise the enemy before daylight: he was not aware at the time that additional troops had arrived under General Burgoyne.

After landing, he marched with rapidity towards Three Rivers, but was led by treacherous guides into a morass, and obliged to return back nearly two miles. Day broke, and he was discovered from the ships. A cannonade was opened upon his men as they made their way slowly for an hour and a half through a swamp. At length they arrived in sight of Three Rivers, but it was to find a large force drawn up in battle array, under General Frazer, by whom they were warmly attacked, and after a brief stand thrown into confusion. Thompson attempted to rally his troops, and partly succeeded, until a fire was opened upon them in rear by Nesbit, who had landed from his ships. Their rout now was complate. General Thompson, Colonel Irvine, and about two hundred men were captured, twenty-five were slain, and the rest pursued for several miles through a deep swamp. After great fatigues and sufferings, they were able to get on board of their boats, which had been kept from falling into the hands of the enemy. In these they made their way back to the Sorel, bringing General Sullivan a sad explanation of all the firing he had heard, and the

alarming intelligence of the overpowering force that was coming up the river.

"This, my dear general," writes Sullivan, in the conclusion of his letter, "is the state of this unfortunate enterprise. What you will next hear I cannot say. I am every moment informed of the vast number of the enemy which have arrived. I have only two thousand five hundred and thirty-three rank and file. Most of the officers seem discouraged, and, of course, their men. I am employed day and night in fortifying and securing my camp, and am determined to hold it as long as a person will stick by me."

He had, indeed, made the desperate resolve to defend the mouth of the Sorel, but was induced to abandon it by the unanimous opinion of his officers, and the evident unwillingness of his troops. Dismantling his batteries, therefore, he retreated with his artillery and stores, just before the arrival of the enemy, and was followed, step by step along the Sorel, by a strong column under General Burgoyne.

On the 18th of June, he was joined by General Arnold with three hundred men, the garrison of Montreal, who had crossed at Longueil just in time to escape a large detachment of the enemy. Thus reinforced, and the evacuation of Canada being determined on in a council of war, Sullivan succeeded in destroying everything at Chamblee and St. Johns that he could not carry away, breaking down bridges, and leaving forts and vessels in flames, and continued his retreat to the Isle aux Noix, where he made a halt for some days, until he should receive positive orders from Washington or General Schuyler. In a letter to Washington he observes, "I am extremely sorry it was not in my power to fulfil your Excellency's wishes, by leading on our troops to victory." After stating the reason of his failure he adds, "I think we shall secure all the public stores and baggage of the army, and secure our retreat with very little loss. Whether we shall have well men enough to carry them on I much doubt, if we don't remove quickly; unless Heaven is pleased to restore health to this wretched army, now, perhaps, the most pitiful one that ever was formed."

The low, unhealthy situation of the Isle aux Noix, obliged him soon to remove his camp to the Isle la Motte,

whence, on receiving orders to that effect from General Schuyler, he ultimately embarked with his forces, sick and well, for Crown Point.

Thus ended this famous invasion; an enterprise bold in its conception, daring and hardy in its execution; full of ingenious expedients, and hazardous exploits; and which, had not unforeseen circumstances counteracted its well-devised plans, might have added all Canada to the American confederacy.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Designs of the Enemy against New York and the Hudson—Plot of Tryon and the Tories—Arrival of a Fleet—Alarm Posts—Treachery up the Hudson—Fresh Arrivals—General Howe at Staten Island—Washington's Preparations.

The great aim of the British, at present, was to get possession of New York and the Hudson, and make them the basis of military operations. This they hoped to effect on the arrival of a powerful armament, hourly expected, and designed for operations on the seaboard.

At this critical juncture there was an alarm of a conspiracy among the Tories in the city and on Long Island, suddenly to take up arms and co-operate with the British troops on their arrival. The wildest reports were in circulation concerning it. Some of the Tories were to break down King's Bridge, others were to blow up the magazines, spike the guns, and massacre all the field-officers. Washington was to be killed or delivered up to the enemy. Some of his own body-guard were said to be in the plot.

Several publicans of the city were pointed out, as having aided or abetted the plot. One was landlord of the Highlander, at the corner of Beaver Street and Broadway. Another dispensed liquor under the sign of Robin Hood. Another, named Lowry, described as a "fat man in a blue coat," kept tavern in a low house opposite the Oswego market. Another, James Houlding, kept a beer-house in Tryon Row, opposite the gates of the upper barracks. It would seem as if a network of corruption and treachery had been woven throughout the city by means of these

liquor dealers. One of the most noted, however, was Corbie, whose tavern was said to be "to the south-east of General Washington's house, to the westward of Baynard's Woods, and north of Lispenard's Meadows," from which it would appear that, at that time, the general was quartered at what was formerly called Richmond Hill; a mansion surrounded by trees, at a short distance from the city, in rather an isolated situation.

A committee of the New York Congress, of which John Jay was chairman, traced the plot up to Governor Tryon, who, from his safe retreat on shipboard, acted through agents on shore. The most important of these was David Matthews, the Tory mayor of the city. He was accused of disbursing money to enlist men, purchase arms, and corrupt the soldiery.

Washington was authorized and requested by the committee to cause the mayor to be apprehended, and all his papers secured. Matthews was at that time residing at Flatbush on Long Island, at no great distance from General Greene's encampment. Washington transmitted the warrant of the committee to the general on the 21st, with directions that it should "be executed with precision, and exactly by one o'clock of the ensuing morning, by a careful officer."

Precisely at the hour of one, a detachment from Greene's brigade surrounded the house of the mayor, and secured his person; but no papers were found, though diligent search was made.

Numerous other arrests took place, and among the number, some of Washington's body-guard. A great dismay fell upon the Tories. Some of those on Long Island who had proceeded to arm themselves, finding the plot discovered, sought refuge in woods and morasses. Washington directed that those arrested, who belonged to the army, should be tried by a court-martial, and the rest handed over to the secular power.

According to statements made before the committee, five guineas bounty was offered by Governor Tryon, to each man who should enter the king's service, with a promise of two hundred acres of land for himself, one hundred for his wife, and fifty for each child. The men thus re-

cruited were to act on shore in co-operation with the king's troops when they came.

Corbie's tavern, near Washington's quarters, was a kind of rendezvous of the conspirators. There, one Gilbert Forbes, a gunsmith, "a short, thick man, with a white coat," enlisted men, gave them money, and "swore them on the book to secrecy." From this house a correspondence was kept up with Governor Tryon on shipboard, through a "mulatto-coloured negro, dressed in blue clothes." At this tavern it was supposed Washington's body-guards were tampered with. Thomas Hickey, one of the guards, a dark-complexioned man, five feet six inches high, and well set, was said not only to be enlisted, but to have aided in corrupting his comrades; among others, Greene the drummer, and Johnson the fifer.

It was further testified before the committee, that one Sergeant Graham, an old soldier, formerly of the royal artillery, had been employed by Governor Tryon to prowl round and survey the grounds and works about the city, and on Long Island, and that, on information thus procured, a plan of operations had been concerted. On the arrival of the fleet, a man-of-war should cannonade the battery at Red Hook; while that was doing, a detachment of the army should land below with cannon, and by a circuitous march, surprise and storm the works on Long Island. The shipping then, with the remainder of the army, were to divide, one part to run up the Hudson, the other up the East River; troops were to land above New York secure the pass at King's Bridge, and cut off all communication between the city and country."[1]

Much of the evidence given was of a dubious kind. It was certain that persons had secretly been enlisted, and sworn to hostile operations, but Washington did not think that any regular plan had been digested by the conspirators. "The matter," writes he, "I am in hopes, by a timely discovery, will be suppressed,"[2]

According to the mayor's own admission before the committee, he had been cognizant of attempts to enlist Tories, and corrupt Washington's guards, though he declared

[1] Am. Arch. 4th Series, vi. 1177.

[2] Washington to the President of Congress, June 28.

that he had discountenanced them. He had, on one occasion, also, at the request of Governor Tryon, paid money for him to Gilbert Forbes, the gunsmith, for rifles and round-bored guns, which he had readily furnished, and for others which he was to make. He had done so, however (according to his account), with great reluctance, and after much hesitation and delay, warning the gunsmith that he would be hanged if found out. The mayor, with a number of others, were detained in prison to await a trial.

Thomas Hickey, the individual of Washington's guard, was tried before a court-martial. He was an Irishman, and had been a deserter from the British army. The court-martial found him guilty of mutiny and sedition, and treacherous correspondence with the enemy, and sentenced him to be hanged.

The sentence was approved by Washington, and was carried promptly into effect, in the most solemn and impressive manner, to serve as a warning and example in this time of treachery and danger. On the morning of the 28th, all the officers and men off duty, belonging to the brigades of Heath, Spencer, Stirling, and Scott, assembled under arms at their respective parades at 10 o'clock, and marched thence to the ground. Twenty men from each brigade, with bayonets fixed, guarded the prisoner to the place of execution, which was a field near Bowery Lane. There he was hanged in the presence, we are told, of near twenty thousand persons.

While the city was still brooding over this doleful spectacle, four ships of war, portentous visitants, appeared off the Hook, stood quietly in at the Narrows, and dropped anchor in the bay.

In his orderly-book, Washington expressed a hope that the unhappy fate of Thomas Hickey, executed that day for mutiny, sedition, and treachery, would be a warning to every soldier in the line, to avoid the crimes for which he suffered.[1]

[1] As a specimen of the reports which circulated throughout the country, concerning this conspiracy, we give an extract from a letter, written from Weathersfield, in Connecticut, 9th of July, 1766, by the Rev. John Marsh.

"You have heard of the infernal plot that has been discovered

On the 29th of June, an express from the look-out on Staten Island announced that forty sail were in sight. They were, in fact, ships from Halifax, bringing between nine and ten thousand of the troops recently expelled from Boston, together with six transports filled with Highland troops, which had joined the fleet at sea. At sight of this formidable armament standing into the harbour, Washington instantly sent notice of its arrival to Colonel James Clinton, who had command of the posts in the Highlands, and urged all possible preparation to give the enemy a warm reception, should they push their frigates up the river.

According to general orders issued from head-quarters on the following day (June 30), the officers and men, not on duty, were to march from their respective regimental parades to their alarm posts at least once every day, that they might become well acquainted with them. They were to go by routes least exposed to a fire from the shipping, and all the officers, from the highest to the lowest, were to make themselves well acquainted with the grounds. Upon a signal of the enemy's approach, or upon any alarm,

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About ten days before any of the conspirators were taken up, a woman went to the general and desired a private audience. He granted it to her, and she let him know that his life was in danger, and gave him such an account of the conspiracy as gained his confidence. He opened the matter to a few friends, on whom he could depend. A strict watch was kept night and day, until a favourable opportunity occurred; when the general went to bed as usual, arose about two o'clock, told his lady he was a going, with some of the Provincial Congress, to order some Tories to be seized—desired she would make herself easy, and go to sleep. He went off without any of his aides-de-camp, except the captain of his life-guard, was joined by a number of chosen men, with lanterns, and proper instruments to break open houses, and before six o'clock next morning, had forty men under guard at the City Hall, among whom was the mayor of the city, several merchants, and five or six of his own life-guard. Upon examination, one Forbes confessed that the plan was to assassinate the general, and as many of the superior officers as they could, and to blow up the magazine upon the appearance of the enemy's fleet, and to go off in boats prepared for that purpose to join the enemy. Thos. Hickey, who has been executed, went from this place. He came from Ireland a few years ago. What will be done with the mayor is uncertain. He can't be tried by court-martial, and, it is said, there is no law of that colony by which he can be condemned. May he have his deserts!"

all fatigue parties were immediately to repair to their respective corps with their arms, ammunition, and accoutrements, ready for instant action.

It was ascertained that the ramifications of the conspiracy lately detected extended up the Hudson. Many of the disaffected in the upper counties were enlisted in it. The committee of safety at Cornwall, in Orange County, sent word to Colonel James Clinton, Fort Constitution, of the mischief that was brewing. James Haff, a Tory, had confessed before them, that he was one of a number who were to join the British troops as soon as they should arrive. It was expected the latter would push up the river and land at Verplanck's Point; whereupon the guns at the forts in the Highlands were to be spiked by soldiers of their own garrisons; and the Tories throughout the country were to be up in arms.[1]

Clinton received letters, also, from a meeting of committees in the precincts of Newburgh, apprising him that persons dangerous to the cause were lurking in that neighbourhood, and requesting him to detach twenty-five men under a certain lieutenant acquainted with the woods, "to aid in getting some of these rascals apprehended and secured."

While city and country were thus agitated by apprehensions of danger, internal and external, other arrivals swelled the number of ships in the bay of New York to one hundred and thirty, men-of-war and transports. They made no movement to ascend the Hudson, but anchored off Staten Island, where they landed their troops, and the hill sides were soon whitened with their tents.

In the frigate 'Greyhound,' one of the four ships which first arrived, came General Howe. He had preceded the fleet, in order to confer with Governor Tryon, and inform himself of the state of affairs. In a letter to his government he writes, "I met with Governor Tryon on board of a ship at the Hook, and many gentlemen, fast friends of government, attending him, from whom I have the fullest information of the state of the rebels. * * * We passed the Narrows with three ships of war and the first

[1] Extracts from Minutes of the Committee, Am. Archives, 4th S. vi. 1112.

division of transports, landed the grenadiers and light infantry, as the ships came up, on this island, to the great joy of a most loyal people, long suffering on that account, under the oppression of the rebels stationed among them, who precipitately fled on the approach of the shipping. * * * There is great reason to expect a numerous body of the inhabitants to join the army from the province of York, the Jerseys and Connecticut, who, in this time of universal oppression, only wait for opportunities to give proofs of their loyalty and zeal."[1]

Washington beheld the gathering storm with an anxious eye, aware that General Howe only awaited the arrival of his brother, the admiral, to commence hostile operations. He wrote to the President of Congress, urging a call on the Massachusetts government for its quota of continental troops, and the formation of a flying camp of ten thousand men, to be stationed in the Jerseys as a central force, ready to act in any direction as circumstances might require.

On the 2nd of July he issued a general order, calling upon the troops to prepare for a momentous conflict which was to decide their liberties and fortunes. Those who should signalize themselves by acts of bravery would be noticed and rewarded; those who proved craven would be exposed and punished. No favour would be shown to such as refused or neglected to do their duty at so important a crisis.

[1] Governor Tryon, in a letter dated about this time from on board of the 'Duchess of Gordon,' off Staten Island, writes: "The testimony given by the inhabitants of the island, of loyalty to his majesty, and attachment to his government, I flatter myself will be general throughout the province, as soon as the army gets the main body of the rebels between them and the sea; which will leave all the back country open to the command of the king's friends, and yield a plentiful resource of provisions for the army, and place them in a better situation to cut off the rebels' retreat when forced from their stronghold."—*Am. Arch. 5th S.* i. 122.

CHAPTER LXVII.

First Appearance of Alexander Hamilton—His early Days—General Hugh Mercer in Command of the Flying Camp—Declaration of Independence—Announced to the Army—Downfall of the King's Statue.

About this time, we have the first appearance in the military ranks of the Revolution, of one destined to take an active and distinguished part in public affairs, and to leave the impress of his genius on the institutions of the country.

As General Greene one day, on his way to Washington's head-quarters, was passing through a field—then on the outskirts of the city, now in the heart of its busiest quarter, and known as "the Park,"—he paused to notice a Provincial company of artillery, and was struck with its able performances, and with the tact and talent of its commander. He was a mere youth, apparently about twenty years of age; small in person and stature, but remarkable for his alert and manly bearing. It was Alexander Hamilton.

Greene was an able tactician, and quick to appreciate any display of military science: a little conversation sufficed to convince him that the youth before him had a mind of no ordinary grasp and quickness. He invited him to his quarters, and from that time cultivated his friendship.

Hamilton was a native of the Island of Nevis, in the West Indies, and at a very early age had been put in a counting-house at Santa Cruz. His nature, however, was aspiring. "I contemn the grovelling condition of a clerk to which my fortune condemns me," writes he to a youthful friend, "and would willingly risk my life, though not my character, to exalt my station. * * * I mean to prepare the way for futurity. I am no philosopher, and may be justly said to build castles in the air; yet we have seen such schemes succeed, when the projector is constant. I shall conclude by saying, I wish there was a war."

Still he applied himself with zeal and fidelity to the duties of his station; and such was the precocity of his judgment, and his aptness at accounts, that, before he was fourteen years of age, he was left for a brief interval, during the absence of the principal, at the head of the

establishment. While his situation in the house gave him a practical knowledge of business, and experience in finance, his leisure hours were devoted to self-cultivation. He made himself acquainted with mathematics and chemistry, and indulged a strong propensity to literature. Some early achievements of his pen attracted attention, and showed such proof of talent, that it was determined to give him the advantages of a regular education. He was accordingly sent to Elizabethtown, in the Jerseys, in the autumn of 1772, to prepare, by a course of studies, for admission into King's (now Columbia) College, at New York. He entered the college as a private student, in the latter part of 1773, and endeavoured, by diligent application, to fit himself for the medical profession.

The contentions of the colonies with the mother-country gave a different direction and impulse to his ardent and aspiring mind. He soon signalized himself by the exercise of his pen, sometimes in a grave, sometimes in a satirical manner. On the 6th of July, 1774, there was a general meeting of the citizens in the 'Fields,' to express their abhorrence of the Boston Port Bill. Hamilton was present, and, prompted by his excited feelings and the instigation of youthful companions, ventured to address the multitude. The vigour and maturity of his intellect, contrasted with his youthful appearance, won the admiration of his auditors; even his diminutive size gave additional effect to his eloquence.

The war, for which in his boyish days he had sighed, was approaching. He now devoted himself to military studies, especially pyrotechnics and gunnery, and formed an amateur corps out of a number of his fellow-students, and the young gentlemen of the city. In the month of March, 1776, he became captain of artillery in a Provincial corps, newly raised, and soon, by able drilling, rendered it conspicuous for discipline.

It was while exercising his artillery company that he attracted, as we have mentioned, the attention of General Greene. Further acquaintance heightened the general's opinion of his extraordinary merits, and he took an early occasion to introduce him to the commander-in-chief, by whom we shall soon find him properly appreciated.

A valuable accession to the army, at this anxious time, was Washington's neighbour, and former companion-in-arms, Hugh Mercer, the veteran of Culloden and Fort Duquesne. His military spirit was alert as ever; the talent he had shown in organizing the Virginia militia, and his zeal and efficiency as a member of the committee of safety, had been properly appreciated by Congress, and on the 5th of June he had received the commission of brigadier-general. He was greeted by Washington with the right hand of fellowship. The flying camp was about forming. The committee of safety of Pennsylvania were forwarding some of the associated militia of that province to the Jerseys, to perform the service of the camp until the militia levies, specified by Congress, should arrive. Washington had the nomination of some continental officer to the command. He gave it to Mercer, of whose merits he felt sure, and sent him over to Paulus Hook, in the Jerseys, to make arrangements for the Pennsylvania militia as they should come in; recommending him to Brigadier-general William Livingston, as an officer on whose experience and judgment great confidence might be reposed.

Livingston was a man inexperienced in arms, but of education, talent, sagacity, and ready wit. He was of the New York family of the same name, but had resided for some time in the Jerseys, having a spacious mansion in Elizabethtown, which he had named Liberty Hall. Mercer and he were to consult together, and concert plans to repel invasions; the New Jersey militia, however, were distinct from the flying camp, and only called out for local defence. New Jersey's greatest danger of invasion was from Staten Island, where the British were throwing up works, and whence they might attempt to cross to Amboy. The flying camp was therefore to be stationed in the neighbourhood of that place.

"The known disaffection of the people of Amboy," writes Washington, "and the treachery of those on Staten Island, who, after the fairest professions, have shown themselves our most inveterate enemies, have induced me to give directions that all persons of known enmity and doubtful character, should be removed from those places."

According to General Livingston's humorous account, his

own village of Elizabethtown was not much more reliable, being peopled in those agitated times by "unknown, unrecommended strangers, guilty-looking Tories, and very knavish Whigs."

While danger was gathering round New York, and its inhabitants were in mute suspense and fearful anticipations, the General Congress at Philadelphia was discussing, with closed doors, what John Adams pronounced "The greatest question ever debated in America, and as great as ever was or will be debated among men." The result was, a resolution passed unanimously, on the 2nd of July, "that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States."

"The 2nd of July," adds the same patriotic statesman, "will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to Almighty God. It ought to be solemnised with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forth for evermore."

The glorious event has, indeed, given rise to an annual jubilee, but not on the day designated by Adams. The fourth of July is the day of national rejoicing, for on that day the "Declaration of Independence," that solemn and sublime document, was adopted. Tradition gives a dramatic effect to its announcement. It was known to be under discussion, but the closed doors of Congress excluded the populace. They awaited, in throngs, an appointed signal. In the steeple of the state-house was a bell, imported twenty-three years previously from London by the Provincial Assembly of Pennsylvania. It bore the portentous text from Scripture: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof." A joyous peal from that bell gave notice that the bill had been passed. It was the knell of British domination.

No one felt the importance of the event more deeply than John Adams, for no one had been more active in producing it. We quote his words written at the moment:—"When

I look back to the year 1761, and recollect the argument concerning writs of assistance in the superior court, which I have hitherto considered as the commencement of the controversy between Great Britain and America, and run through the whole period from that time to this, and recollect the series of political events, the chain of causes and effects, I am surpised at the suddenness, as well as the greatness of this revolution; Great Britain has been filled with folly, America with wisdom."

His only regret was, that the Declaration of Independence had not been made sooner. "Had it been made seven months ago," said he, "we should have mastered Quebec, and been in possession of Canada, and might before this hour have formed alliances with foreign states. Many gentlemen in high stations, and of great influence, have been duped by the ministerial bubble of commissioners to treat, and have been slow and languid in promoting measures for the reduction of that province."

Washington hailed the Declaration with joy. It is true, it was but a formal recognition of a state of things which had long existed, but it put an end to all those temporizing hopes of reconciliation which had clogged the military action of the country.

On the 9th of July, he caused it to be read at six o'clock in the evening, at the head of each brigade of the army. "The general hopes," said he, in his orders, "that this important event will serve as a fresh incentive to every officer and soldier, to act with fidelity and courage, as knowing that now the peace and safety of his country depend, under God, solely on the success of our arms; and that he is now in the service of a state possessed of sufficient power to reward his merit, and advance him to the highest honours of a free country."

The excitable populace of New York were not content with the ringing of bells to proclaim their joy. There was a leaden statue of George III. in the Bowling Green, in front of the fort. Since kingly rule is at an end, why retain its effigy? On the same evening, therefore, the statue was pulled down amid the shouts of the multitude, and broken up to be run into bullets "to be used in the cause of independence."

Some of the soldiery having been implicated in this popular effervescence, Washington censured it in general orders, as having much the appearance of a riot and a want of discipline, and the army was forbidden to indulge in any irregularities of the kind. It was his constant effort to inspire his countrymen in arms with his own elevated idea of the cause in which they were engaged. and to make them feel that it was no ordinary warfare, admitting of vulgar passions and perturbations. "The general hopes and trusts," said he, "that every officer and man will endeavour so to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country."[1]

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Arrival of more Ships—Movements of the 'Phœnix' and the 'Rose'—Panic in the City—Hostile Ships up the Hudson—Stir of War along the River—General George Clinton, and the Militia of Ulster County—Fresh Agitation of New York—Arrival of Lord Howe.

The exultation of the patriots of New York, caused by the Declaration of Independence was soon overclouded. On the 12th of July several ships stood in from sea and joined the naval force below. Every nautical movement was now a matter of speculation and alarm, and all the spy-glasses in the city were incessantly reconnoitring the bay.

"The enemy are now in the harbour," writes an American officer, "although they have not yet ventured themselves within gunshot of the city, but we hourly expect to be called into action. The whole army is out between two and three every morning at their respective alarm posts, and remain there until sunrise. I am morally certain that it will not be long before we have an engagement."

Scarce had this letter been penned, when two ships of war were observed getting under way and standing toward the city. One was the 'Phœnix,' of forty guns; the other the 'Rose,' of twenty guns, commanded by Captain Wallace, of unenviable renown, who had marauded the New England coast, and domineered over Rhode Island. The troops were immediately at their alarm posts. It was about

[1] Orderly-book, July 9, Sparks, iii. 456.

half-past three o'clock in the afternoon as the ships and three tenders came sweeping up the bay with the advantage of wind and tide, and shaped their course up the Hudson. The batteries of the city and of Paulus Hook on the opposite Jersey shore opened a fire upon them. They answered it with broadsides. There was a panic throughout the city. Women and children ran hither and thither about the streets, mingling their shrieks and cries with the thundering of the cannon. "The attack has begun! The city is to be destroyed! What will become of us?"

The 'Phœnix' and the 'Rose' continued their course up the Hudson. They had merely fired upon the batteries as they passed, and, on their part, had sustained but little damage, their decks having ramparts of sand-bags. The ships below remained in sullen quiet at their anchors, and showed no intention of following them. The firing ceased. The fear of a general attack upon the city died away, and the agitated citizens breathed more freely.

Washington, however, apprehended this movement of the ships might be with a different object. They might be sent to land troops and seize upon the passes of the Highlands. Forts Montgomery and Constitution were far from complete, and were scantily manned. A small force might be sufficient to surprise them. The ships might intend also to distribute arms among the Tories in the river counties, and prepare them to co-operate in the apprehended attack upon New York.

Thus thinking, the moment Washington saw these ships standing up the river he sent off an express to put General Mifflin on the alert, who was stationed with his Philadelphia troops at Fort Washington and King's Bridge. The same express carried a letter from him to the New York Convention, at that time holding its sessions at White Plains, in Westchester County, apprising it of the impending danger. His immediate solicitude was for the safety of Forts Constitution and Montgomery.

Fortunately George Clinton, the patriotic legislator, had recently been appointed brigadier-general of the militia of Ulster and Orange Counties. Called to his native state by his military duties in this time of danger, he had only remained in Congress to vote for the Declaration of Inde-

pendence, and then hastened home. He was now at New Windsor, in Ulster County, just above the Highlands. Washington wrote to him on the afternoon of the 12th, urging him to collect as great a force as possible of the New York militia, for the protection of the Highlands against this hostile irruption, and to solicit aid, if requisite, from the western parts of Connecticut. "I have the strongest reason to believe," added he, "it will be absolutely necessary, if it were only to prevent an insurrection of your own Tories."

Long before the receipt of Washington's letter Clinton had been put on the alert. About nine o'clock in the morning of the 13th an alarm gun from his brother at Fort Constitution thundered through the echoing defiles of the mountains. Shortly afterwards two river sloops came to anchor above the Highlands, before the general's residence. Their captains informed him that New York had been attacked on the preceding afternoon. They had seen the cannonade from a distance, and judged, from the subsequent firing, that the enemy's ships were up the river as far as King's Bridge.

Clinton was as prompt a soldier as he had been an intrepid legislator. The neighbouring militia were forthwith put in motion. Three regiments were ordered out; one was to repair to Fort Montgomery, another to Fort Constitution, the third to rendezvous at Newburgh, just above the Highlands, ready to hasten to the assistance of Fort Constitution should another signal be given. All the other regiments under his command were to be prepared for service at a moment's notice. In ordering these hasty levies, however, he was as considerate as he was energetic. The colonels were directed to leave the frontier companies at home to protect the country against the Indians, and some men out of each company to guard against internal enemies.

Another of his sagacious measures was to send expresses to all the owners of sloops and boats twenty miles up the west side of the river to haul them off so as to prevent their grounding. Part of them were to be ready to carry over the militia to the forts; the rest were ordered down to Fort Constitution, where a chain of them might be drawn

across the narrowest part of the river, to be set on fire should the enemy's ships attempt to pass.

Having made these prompt arrangements, he proceeded early in the afternoon of the same day, with about forty of his neighbours, to Fort Constitution; whence leaving some with his brother, he pushed down on the same evening to Fort Montgomery, where he fixed his head-quarters, as being nearer the enemy and better situated to discover their motions.

Here, on the following day (July 14th), he received Washington's letter, written two days previously; but by this time he had anticipated its orders, and stirred up the whole country. On that same evening, two or three hundred of the hardy Ulster yeomanry, roughly equipped, part of one of the regiments he had ordered out, marched into Fort Montgomery, headed by their colonel (Woodhull). Early the next morning five hundred of another regiment arrived, and he was told that parts of two other regiments were on the way.

"The men," writes he to Washington, "turn out of their harvest fields to defend their country with surprising alacrity. The absence of so many of them, however, at this time, when their harvests are perishing for want of the sickle, will greatly distress the country. I could wish, therefore, that a less number might answer the purpose."

On no one could this prompt and brave gathering of the yeomanry produce a more gratifying effect, than upon the commander-in-chief; and no one could be more feelingly alive, in the midst of stern military duties, to the appeal in behalf of the peaceful interests of the husbandman.

While the vigilant Clinton was preparing to defend the passes of the Highlands, danger was growing more imminent at the mouth of the Hudson.

New York has always been a city prone to agitations. That into which it was thrown on the afternoon of the 12th of July, by the broadsides of the 'Phœnix' and the 'Rose,' was almost immediately followed by another. On the same evening, there was a great booming of cannon, with clouds of smoke, from the shipping at anchor at Staten Island. Every spy-glass was again in requisition.

The British fleet were saluting a ship of the line, just arrived from sea. She advanced grandly, every man-of-war thundering a salute as she passed. At her foretop mast-head she bore St. George's flag. "It is the admiral's ship!" cried the nautical men on the look-out at the Battery. "It is the admiral's ship!" was echoed from mouth to mouth, and the word soon flew throughout the city, "Lord Howe is come!"

CHAPTER LXIX.

Precautions against Tories—Secret Committees—Declaration of Lord Howe—His Letter to the Colonial Governors—His Letter to Washington rejected—Interview between the British Adjutant-General and Colonel Reed—Reception of the Adjutant-General by Washington—The 'Phœnix' and 'Rose' in the Tappan Sea and Haverstraw Bay—Arming of the River Yeomanry—George Clinton at the Gates of the Highlands.

Lord Howe was indeed come, and affairs now appeared to be approaching a crisis. In consequence of the recent conspiracy the Convention of New York, seated at White Plains in Westchester county, had a secret committee stationed in New York for the purpose of taking cognizance of traitorous machinations. To this committee Washington addressed a letter the day after his lordship's arrival, suggesting the policy of removing from the city and its environs, "all persons of known disaffection and enmity to the cause of America;" especially those confined in jail for treasonable offences, who might become extremely dangerous in case of an attack and alarm. He took this step with great reluctance; but felt compelled to it by circumstances. The late conspiracy had shown him that treason might be lurking in his camp. And he was well aware that the city, and the neighbouring country, especially Westchester county, and Queens and Suffolk counties on Long Island, abounded with "Tories," ready to rally under the royal standard whenever backed by a commanding force.

In consequence of his suggestion, thirteen persons in confinement for traitorous offences, were removed to the jail of Litchfield, in Connecticut. Among the number

was the late mayor; but as his offence was not of so deep a dye as those whereof the rest stood charged, it was recommended by the president of the Convention that he should be treated with indulgence.

The proceedings of Lord Howe soon showed the policy of these precautions. His lordship had prepared a declaration addressed to the people at large, informing them of the powers vested in his brother and himself as commissioners for restoring peace; and inviting communities as well as individuals, who, in the tumult and disasters of the times had deviated from their allegiance to the crown, to merit and receive pardon by a prompt return to their duty. It was added, that proper consideration would be had of the services of all who should contribute to the restoration of public tranquillity.

His lordship really desired peace. According to a contemporary, he came to America "as a mediator, not as a destroyer,"[1] and had founded great hopes on the efficacy of this document in rallying back the people to their allegiance; it was a sore matter of regret to him, therefore, to find that, in consequence of his tardy arrival, his invitation to loyalty had been forestalled by the Declaration of Independence.

Still it might have an effect in bringing adherents to the royal standard; he sent a flag on shore, therefore, bearing a circular letter, written in his civil and military capacity, to the colonial governor, requesting him to publish his address to the people as widely as possible.

We have heretofore shown the tenacity with which Washington, in his correspondence with Generals Gage and Howe, exacted the consideration and deference due to him as commander-in-chief of the American armies; he did this not from official pride and punctilio, but as the guardian of American rights and dignities. A further step of the kind was yet to be taken. The British officers, considering the Americans in arms as rebels without valid commissions, were in the habit of denying them all military title. Washington's general officers had urged him not to submit to this tacit indignity, but to reject all

[1] Letter of Mr. Dennis de Berdt to Mr. Joseph Reed. Am. Archives, 5th Series, i. 372.

letters directed to him without a specification of his official rank.

An occasion now presented for the adjustment of this matter. Within a day or two an officer of the British navy, Lieutenant Brown, came with a flag from Lord Howe, seeking a conference with Washington. Colonel Reed, the adjutant-general, embarked in a barge, and met him half-way between Governor's and Staten Islands. The lieutenant informed him that he was the bearer of a letter from Lord Howe to *Mr.* Washington. Colonel Reed replied that he knew no such person in the American army. The lieutenant produced and offered the letter. It was addressed to George Washington, Esquire. He was informed that it could not be received with such a direction. The lieutenant expressed much concern. The letter, he said, was of a civil rather than a military nature—Lord Howe regretted he had not arrived sooner—he had great powers—it was much to be wished the letter could be received.

While the lieutenant was embarrassed and agitated, Reed maintained his coolness, politely declining to receive the letter, as inconsistent with his duty. They parted; but after the lieutenant had been rowed some little distance, his barge was put about, and Reed waited to hear what further he had to say. It was to ask by what title *General*—but, catching himself, *Mr.* Washington chose to be addressed.

Reed replied, that the general's station in the army was well known; and they could not be at a loss as to the proper mode of addressing him, especially as this matter had been discussed in the preceding summer, of which, he presumed, the admiral could not be ignorant. The lieutenant again expressed his disappointment and regret, and their interview closed.

On the 19th, an aide-de-camp of General Howe came with a flag, and requested to know, as there appeared to be an obstacle to a correspondence between the two generals, whether Colonel Patterson, the British adjutant-general, could be admitted to an interview with General Washington. Colonel Reed, who met the flag, consented in the name of the general, and pledged his honour for the

safety of the adjutant-general during the interview, which was fixed for the following morning.

At the appointed time, Colonel Reed and Colonel Webb, one of Washington's aides, met the flag in the harbour, took Colonel Patterson into their barge, and escorted him to town, passing in front of the grand battery. The customary precaution of blindfolding was dispensed with; and there was a lively and sociable conversation the whole way. Washington received the adjutant-general at head-quarters with much form and ceremony, in full military array, with his officers and guards about him.

Colonel Patterson, addressing him by the title of *your excellency*, endeavoured to explain the address of the letter as consistent with propriety, and founded on a similar address in the previous summer, to General Howe. That General Howe did not mean to derogate from the respect or rank of General Washington, but conceived such an address consistent with what had been used by ambassadors or plenipotentiaries where difficulties of rank had arisen. He then produced, but did not offer, a letter addressed to George Washington, Esquire, &c. &c., hoping that the et ceteras, which implied everything, would remove all impediments.

Washington replied, that it was true the et ceteras implied everything, but they also implied anything. His letter alluded to, of the previous summer, was in reply to one addressed in like manner. A letter, he added, addressed to a person acting in a public character, should have some inscription to designate it from a mere private letter; and he should absolutely decline any letter addressed to himself as a private person, when it related to his public station.

Colonel Patterson, finding the letter would not be received, endeavoured, as far as he could recollect, to communicate the scope of it in the course of a somewhat desultory conversation. What he chiefly dwelt upon was, that Lord Howe and his brother had been specially nominated commissioners for the promotion of peace, which was esteemed a mark of favour and regard to America; that they had great powers, and would derive the highest pleasure from effecting an accommodation; and he concluded by adding, that he

wished his visit to be considered as making the first advance towards that desirable object.

Washington replied that, by what had appeared (alluding, no doubt, to Lord Howe's circular), their powers, it would seem, were only to grant pardons. Now those who had committed no fault needed no pardon; and such was the case with the Americans, who were only defending what they considered their indisputable rights.

Colonel Patterson avoided a discussion of this matter, which, he observed, would open a very wide field; so here the conference, which had been conducted on both sides with great courtesy, terminated. The colonel took his leave, excusing himself from partaking of a collation, having made a late breakfast, and was again conducted to his boat. He expressed himself highly sensible of the courtesy of his treatment, in having the usual ceremony of blindfolding dispensed with.

Washington received the applause of Congress and of the public for sustaining the dignity of his station. His conduct in this particular was recommended as a model to all American officers in corresponding with the enemy; and Lord Howe informed his government that, thenceforward, it would be politic to change the superscription of his letters.

In the mean time the irruption of the 'Phœnix' and the 'Rose' into the waters of the Hudson had roused a belligerent spirit along its borders. The lower part of that noble river is commanded on the eastern side by the bold woody heights of Manhattan Island and Westchester County, and on the western side by the rocky cliffs of the Palisades. Beyond those cliffs, the river expands into a succession of what may almost be termed lakes; first, the Tappan Sea, then Haverstraw Bay, then the Bay of Peekskill; separated from each other by long stretching points, or high beetling promontories, but affording ample sea-room and safe anchorage. Then come the redoubtable Highlands, that strait, fifteen miles in length, where the river bends its course, narrow and deep, between rocky forest-clad mountains. "He who has command of that grand defile," said an old navigator, "may at any time throttle the Hudson."

The New York Convention, aware of the impending danger, despatched military envoys to stir up the yeomanry along the river, and order out militia. Powder and ball were sent to Tarrytown, before which the hostile ships were anchored, and yeoman troops were stationed there and along the neighbouring shores of the Tappan Sea. In a little while the militia of Duchess County and Cortlandt's Manor were hastening, rudely armed, to protect the public stores at Peekskill, and mount guard at the entrance of the Highlands.

No one showed more zeal in this time of alarm than Colonel Pierre Van Cortlandt, of an old colonial family, which held its manorial residence at the mouth of the Croton. With his regiment he kept a dragon watch along the eastern shore of the Tappan Sea and Haverstraw Bay; while equal vigilance was maintained night and day along the western shore, from Nyack quite up to the Donderberg, by Colonel Hay and his regiment of Haverstraw. Sheep and cattle were driven inland, out of the reach of maraud. Sentinels were posted, to keep a look-out from heights and headlands, and give the alarm should any boats approach the shore, and rustic marksmen were ready to assemble in a moment, and give them a warm reception,

The ships of war which caused this alarm and turmoil, lay quietly anchored in the broad expanses of the Tappan Sea and Haverstraw Bay; shifting their ground occasionally, and keeping out of musket-shot of the shore, apparently sleeping in the summer sunshine, with awnings stretched above their decks; while their boats were out taking soundings quite up to the Highlands, evidently preparing for further operations. At night, too, their barges were heard rowing up and down the river on mysterious errands; perriaugers, also, paid them furtive visits occasionally; it was surmised, with communications and supplies from Tories on shore.

While the ships were anchored in Haverstraw Bay, one of the tenders stood into the Bay of Peekskill, and beat up within long-shot of Fort Montgomery, where General George Clinton was ensconced with six hundred of the militia of Orange and Ulster counties. As the tender approached, a thirty-two pounder was brought to range

upon her. The ball passed through her quarter; whereupon she put about, and ran round the point of the Donderberg, where her boat landed, plundered a solitary house at the foot of the mountain, and left it in flames. The marauders, on their way back to the ships, were severely galled by rustic marksmen from a neighbouring promontory.

The ships, now acquainted with the channel, moved up within six miles of Fort Montgomery. General Clinton apprehended they might mean to take advantage of a dark night, and slip by him in the deep shadows of the mountains. The shores were high and bold, the river was deep, the navigation of course safe and easy. Once above the Highlands, they might ravage the country beyond, and destroy certain vessels of war which were being constructed at Poughkeepsie.

To prevent this, he stationed a guard at night on the furthest point in view, about two miles and a half below the fort, prepared to kindle a blazing fire, should the ships appear in sight. Large piles of dry brushwood, mixed with combustibles, were prepared at various places up and down the shore opposite to the fort, and men stationed to set fire to them as soon as a signal should be given from the lower point. The fort, therefore, while it remained in darkness, would have a fair chance with its batteries as the ships passed between it and these conflagrations.

A private committee, sent up by the New York Convention, had a conference with the general, to devise further means of obstructing the passage of ships up the river. Fire-rafts were to be brought from Poughkeepsie, and kept at hand ready for action. These were to be lashed two together, with chains between old sloops filled with combustibles, and sent down with a strong wind and tide, to drive upon the ships. An iron chain, also, was to be stretched obliquely across the river from Fort Montgomery to the foot of Anthony's Nose, thus, as it were, chaining up the gate of the Highlands.

For a protection below the Highlands, it was proposed to station whale-boats about the coves and promontories of Tappan Sea and Haverstraw Bay, to reconnoitre the enemy, cruise about at night, carry intelligence from post

to post, seize any river craft that might bring the ships supplies, and cut off their boats when attempting to land. Galleys, also, were prepared, with nine-pounders mounted at the bows.

Colonel Hay of Haverstraw, in a letter to Washington, rejoices that the national Congress are preparing to protect this great highway of the country, and anticipates that the banks of the Hudson were about to become the chief theatre of the war.

NOTE.

The Van Cortlandt Family. — Two members of this old and honourable family were conspicuous patriots throughout the Revolution. Pierre Van Cortlandt, the father, at this time about 56 years of age, a staunch friend and ally of George Clinton, was member of the first Provincial Congress, and president of the Committee of Public Safety. Governor Tryon had visited him in his old manor-house at the mouth of the Croton, in 1774, and made him offers of Royal favours, honours, grants of land, &c., if he would abandon the popular cause. His offers were nobly rejected. The Cortlandt family suffered in consequence, being at one time obliged to abandon their manorial residence: but the head remained true to the cause, and subsequently filled the office of Lieutenant-governor with great dignity.

His son Pierre, mentioned in the above chapter, and then about 27 years of age, had likewise resisted the overtures of Tryon, destroying a major's commission in the Cortlandt militia, which he sent him. Congress, in 1775, made him lieutenant-colonel in the Continental service, in which capacity we now find him, acquitting himself with zeal and ability.

CHAPTER LXX.

Question of command between Gates and Schuyler—Condition of the Army at Crown Point—Discontent and departure of Sullivan—Fortifications at Ticonderoga—The question of command adjusted—Secret Discontents—Sectional Jealousies in the Army—Southern Troops—Smallwood's Macaroni Battalion—Connecticut Light-horse.

While the security of the Hudson from invading ships was claiming the attention of Washington, he was equally anxious to prevent an irruption of the enemy from Canada. He was grieved, therefore, to find there was a clashing of authorities between the generals who had charge of the northern frontier. Gates, on his way to take command of the army in Canada, had heard with surprise in Albany of its retreat across the New York frontier. He still con-

sidered it under his orders, and was proceeding to act accordingly, when General Schuyler observed, that the resolution of Congress, and the instructions of Washington, applied to the army only while in Canada; the moment it retreated within the limits of New York, it came within his (Schuyler's) command. A letter from Schuyler to Washington, written at the time, says: "If Congress intended that General Gates should command the Northern army, wherever it may be, as he assures me they did, it ought to have been signified to me, and I should then have immediately resigned the command to him; but until such intention is properly conveyed to me, I never can. I must, therefore, entreat your Excellency to lay this letter before Congress, that they may clearly and explicitly signify their intentions, to avert the dangers and evils that may arise from a disputed command."

That there might be no delay in the service at this critical juncture, the two generals agreed to refer the question of command to Congress, and in the mean time to act in concert. They accordingly departed together for Lake Champlain, to prepare against an anticipated invasion by Sir Guy Carleton. They arrived at Crown Point on the 6th of July, and found there the wrecks of the army recently driven out of Canada. They had been harassed in their retreat by land; their transportation on the lake had been in leaky boats, without awnings, where the sick, suffering from small-pox, lay on straw, exposed to a burning July sun; no food but salt pork, often rancid, hard biscuit or unbaked flour, and scarcely any medicine. Not more than six thousand men had reached Crown Point, and half of those were on the sick list; the shattered remains of twelve or fifteen very fine battalions. Some few were sheltered in tents, some under sheds, and others in huts hastily formed of bushes; scarce one of which but contained a dead or dying man. Two thousand eight hundred were to be sent to a hospital recently established at the south end of Lake George, a distance of fifty miles; when they were gone, with those who were to row them in boats, there would remain but the shadow of an army.[1]

[1] Col. John Trumbull's Autobiography, p. 285, appendix.

In a council of war, it was determined that, under present circumstances, the post of Crown Point was not tenable; neither was it capable of being made so this summer, without a force greatly superior to any they might reasonably expect; and that, therefore, it was expedient to fall back, and take a strong position at Ticonderoga.

General Sullivan had been deeply hurt that Gates, his former inferior in rank, should have been appointed over him to the command of the army in Canada; considering it a tacit intimation that Congress did not esteem him competent to the trust which had devolved upon him. He now, therefore, requested leave of absence, in order to wait on the commander-in-chief. It was granted with reluctance. Before departing, he communicated to the army, through General Schuyler, his high and grateful sense of their exertions in securing a retreat from Canada, and the cheerfulness with which his commands had been received and obeyed.

On the 9th of July, Schuyler and Gates returned to Ticonderoga, accompanied by Arnold. Instant arrangements were made to encamp the troops, and land the artillery and stores as fast as they should arrive. Great exertions, also, were made to strengthen the defences of the place. Colonel John Trumbull, who was to have accompanied Gates to Canada as adjutant-general, had been reconnoitring the neighbourhood of Ticonderoga, and had pitched upon a place for a fortification on the eastern side of the lake, directly opposite the east point of Ticonderoga, where Fort Independence was subsequently built. He also advised the erection of a work on a lofty eminence, the termination of a mountain ridge, which separates Lake George from Lake Champlain. His advice was unfortunately disregarded. The eminence, subsequently called Mount Defiance, looked down upon and commanded the narrow parts of both lakes. We shall hear more of it hereafter.

Preparations were made, also, to augment the naval force on the lakes. Ship carpenters from the Eastern States were employed at Skenesborough, to build the hulls of galleys and boats, which, when launched, were to be sent

down to Ticonderoga for equipment and armament, under the superintendence of General Arnold.

Schuyler soon returned to Albany, to superintend the general concerns of the northern department. He was indefatigable in procuring and forwarding the necessary materials and artillery for the fortification of Ticonderoga.

The question of command between him and Gates was apparently at rest. A letter from the President of Congress, dated July 8th, informed General Gates, that, according to the resolution of that body under which he had been appointed, his command was totally independent of General Schuyler, *while the army was in Canada*, but no longer. "Congress had no design to divest General Schuyler of the command while the troops were *on this side of Canada*."

To Schuyler, under the same date, the President writes: "The Congress highly approve of your patriotism and magnanimity in not suffering any difference of opinion to hurt the public service.

"A mutual confidence and good understanding are at this time essentially necessary, so that I am persuaded they will take place on all occasions between yourself and General Gates."

Gates professed himself entirely satisfied with the explanation he had received, and perfectly disposed to obey the commands of Schuyler. "I am confident," added he, "we shall, as the Congress wish, go hand in hand to promote the public welfare."

Schuyler, too, assured both Congress and Washington, "that the difference in opinion between Gates and himself had not caused the least ill-will, nor interrupted that harmony necessary to subsist between their officers."

Samuel Adams, however, who was at that time in Congress, had strong doubts in the matter.

"Schuyler and Gates are to command the troops," writes he, "the former while they are without, the latter while they are within, the bounds of Canada. Admitting these generals to have the accomplishments of a Marlborough, or a Eugene, I cannot conceive that such a disposition of them will be attended with any good effects, unless harmony subsists between them. Alas, I fear this is not the case! Already disputes have arisen, which they have referred to

Congress; and, although they affect to treat each other with a politeness becoming their rank, in my mind, altercations between commanders who have pretensions nearly equal (I mean in point of command), forbode a repetition of misfortune. I sincerely wish my apprehensions may prove groundless."[1]

We have a letter before us, also written to Gates, by his friend Joseph Trumbull, commissary-general, on whose appointment of a deputy, the question of command had arisen. Trumbull's letter was well calculated to inflame the jealousy of Gates. "I find you are in a cursed situation," writes he; "your authority at an end; and commanded by a person who will be willing to have you knocked in the head, as General Montgomery was, if he can have the money chest in his power."

Governor Trumbull, too, the father of the commissary-general, observes subsequently: "It is justly to be expected that General Gates is discontented with his situation, finding himself limited and removed from the command, to be a wretched spectator of the ruin of the army, without power of attempting to save them."[2] We shall have frequent occasion hereafter to notice the discord in the service caused by this rankling discontent.

As to General Sullivan, who repaired to Philadelphia and tendered his resignation, the question of rank which had aggrieved him, was explained in a manner that induced him to continue in service. It was universally allowed that his retreat had been ably conducted through all kinds of difficulties and disasters.

A greater source of solicitude to Washington than this jealousy between commanders, was the sectional jealousy springing up among the troops. In a letter to Schuyler (July 17th), he says, "I must entreat your attention to do away the unhappy and pernicious distinctions and jealousies between the troops of different governments. Enjoin this upon the officers, and let them inculcate and press home to the soldiery, the necessity of order and harmony among those who are embarked in one common cause, and mutually contending for all that freemen hold dear."

[1] S. Adams to R. H. Lee. Am. Arch. 5th Series, i. 347.
[2] Gov. Trumbull to Mr. William Williams.

Nowhere were these sectional jealousies more prevalent than in the motley army assembled from distant quarters under Washington's own command. Reed, the adjutant-general, speaking on this subject, observes: "The Southern troops, comprising the regiments south of the Delaware, looked with very unkind feelings on those of New England: especially those from Connecticut, whose peculiarities of deportment made them the objects of ill-disguised derision among their fellow-soldiers."[1]

Among the troops thus designated as Southern, were some from Virginia under a Major Leitch; others from Maryland, under Colonel Smallwood; others from Delaware led by Colonel Haslet. There were four continental battalions from Pennsylvania, commanded by Colonels Shee, St. Clair, Wayne and Magaw; and provincial battalions, two of which were severally commanded by Colonels Miles and Atlee. The continental battalion, under Colonel Shee, was chiefly from the city of Philadelphia, especially the officers; among whom were Lambert Cadwalader and William Allen, members of two of the principal, and most aristocratic families, and Alexander Graydon, to whose memoirs we are indebted for some graphic pictures of the times.

These Pennsylvania troops were under the command of Brigadier-general Mifflin, who, in the preceding year, had acted as Washington's aide-de-camp and afterwards as quartermaster-general. His townsman and intimate, Graydon, characterizes him as a man of education and cultivated manners, with a great talent at haranguing; highly animated in his appearance, full of activity and apparently of fire; but rather too much of a bustler, harassing his men unnecessarily. "He assumed," adds Graydon, "a little of the veteran from having been before Boston." His troops were chiefly encamped near King's Bridge, and employed in constructing works at Fort Washington.

Smallwood's Maryland battalion was one of the brightest in point of equipment. The scarlet and buff uniforms of those Southerners contrasted vividly with the rustic attire of the yeoman battalions from the East. Their officers, too,

[1] Life of Reed, vol. i. p. 239.

looked down upon their Connecticut compeers, who could only be distinguished from their men by wearing a cockade. "There were none," says Graydon, "by whom an unofficer-like appearance and deportment could be tolerated less than by a city-bred Marylander; who, at this time, was distinguished by the most fashionable cut coat, the most *macaroni* cocked-hat, and hottest blood in the Union." Alas, for the homespun-clad officers from Connecticut River!

The Pennsylvania regiment under Shee, according to Graydon, promoted balls and other entertainments, in contradistinction to the fast-days and sermons, borrowed from New England. There was nothing of the puritanical spirit among the Pennsylvanian soldiery.

In the same sectional spirit, he speaks of the Connecticut light-horse: "Old-fashioned men, truly irregulars; whether their clothing, equipments, or caparisons were regarded, it would have been difficult to have discovered any circumstance of uniformity. Instead of carbines and sabres, they generally carried fowling-pieces, some of them very long, such as in Pennsylvania are used for shooting ducks. Here and there one appeared in a dingy regimental of scarlet, with a triangular, tarnished laced hat. These singular dragoons were volunteers, who came to make a tender of their services to the commander-in-chief. But they staid not long in New York. As such a body of cavalry had not been counted upon, there was in all probability a want of forage for their *jades*, which, in the spirit of ancient knighthood, they absolutely refused to descend from; and as the general had no use for cavaliers in his insular operations, they were forthwith dismissed, with suitable acknowledgments for their truly chivalrous ardour."[1]

The troops thus satirized were a body of between four and five hundred Connecticut light-horse, under Colonel Thomas Seymour. On an appeal for aid to the Governor of their State, they had voluntarily hastened on in advance of the militia, to render the most speedy succour. Supposing, from the suddenness and urgency of the call upon their services, that they were immediately to be called into action, and promptly to return home, they had come

[1] Graydon's Memoirs, p. 155.

off in such haste, that many were unprovided even with a blanket or a change of clothing.

Washington speaks of them as being for the most part, if not all, men of reputation and property. They were, in fact, mostly farmers. As to their sorry *jades*, they were rough country horses, such as farmers keep, not for show, but service. As to their dingy regimentals, we quote a word in their favour from a writer of that day: "Some of these worthy soldiers assisted in their present uniforms at the reduction of Louisburg, and their 'lank cheeks and war-worn coats' are viewed with more veneration by their honest countrymen than if they were glittering nabobs from India, or bashaws with nine tails." [1]

On arriving, their horses, from scarcity of forage, had to be pastured about King's Bridge. In fact, Washington informed them that, under present circumstances, they could not be of use as horsemen; on which they concluded to stay, and do duty on foot till the arrival of the new levies.[2] In a letter to Governor Trumbull (July 11), Washington observes: "The officers and men of that corps have manifested so firm an attachment to the cause we are engaged in, that they have consented to remain here till such a body of troops are marched from your colony as will be a sufficient reinforcement, so as to admit of their leaving this city with safety. * * * They have the additional merit of determining to stay, even if they are obliged to maintain their horses at their own expense." [3]

In a very few days, however, the troopers, on being requested to mount guard like other soldiers, grew restless and uneasy. Colonel Seymour and his brother field-officers, therefore, addressed a note to Washington, stating that, by the positive laws of Connecticut, the light-horse were expressly exempted from staying in garrison, or doing duty on foot, apart from their horses; and that they found it impossible to detain their men any longer under that idea, they having come "without the least expectation or preparation for such services." They respectfully, therefore, asked a dismission in form. Washington's brief reply shows that he was nettled by their conduct:—

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, i. 175. [2] Webb to Gov. Trumbull.
[3] Am. Archives, 5th Series, i. 192.

"Gentlemen,—In answer to yours of this date, I can only repeat to you what I said last night, and that is, that if your men think themselves exempt from the common duty of a soldier—will not mount guard, do garrison duty, or service separate from their horses—they can no longer be of any use here, where horse cannot be brought to action, and I do not care how soon they are dismissed."

In fact, the assistance of these troops was much needed; yet he apprehended the exemption from fatigue and garrison duty which they demanded as a right would, if granted, set a dangerous example to others, and be productive of many evil consequences.

In the hurry of various concerns he directed his aide-de-camp, Colonel Webb, to write in his name to Governor Trumbull on the subject.

Colonel Seymour, on his return home, addressed a long letter to the governor explanatory of his conduct. "I can't help remarking to your honour," adds he, "that it may with truth be said, General Washington is a gentleman of extreme care and caution; that his requisitions for men are fully equal to the necessities of the case. * * * * I should have stopped here, but am this moment informed that Mr. Webb, General Washington's aide-de-camp, has written to your honour something dishonourable to the light-horse. Whatever it may be I know not; but this I do know, that it is a general observation both in camp and country, if the butterflies and coxcombs were away from the army, we should not be put to so much difficulty in obtaining men of common sense to engage in the defence of their country."[1]

As to the Connecticut infantry which had been furnished by Governor Trumbull in the present emergency, they likewise were substantial farmers, whose business, he observed, would require their return, when the necessity of their further stay in the army should be over. They were all men of simple rural manners from an agricultural State, where great equality of condition prevailed; the officers were elected by the men out of their own ranks; they were their own neighbours, and every way their equals.

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, i. 513.

All this, as yet, was but little understood or appreciated by the troops from the South, among whom military rank was more defined and tenaciously observed, and where the officers were men of the cities, and of more aristocratic habits.

We have drawn out from contemporary sources these few particulars concerning the sectional jealousies thus early springing up among the troops from different States, to show the difficulties with which Washington had to contend at the outset, and which formed a growing object of solicitude throughout the rest of his career.

John Adams, speaking of the violent passions, and discordant interests at work throughout the country, from Florida to Canada, observes: "It requires more serenity of temper, a deeper understanding, and more courage than fell to the lot of Marlborough, to ride in this whirlwind."*

CHAPTER LXXI.

Southern Cruise of Sir Henry Clinton—Fortifications at Charleston—Arrival there of General Lee—Battle at Sullivan's Island—Washington announces the result to the Army.

Letters from General Lee gave Washington intelligence of the fate of Sir Henry Clinton's expedition to the South; that expedition which had been the subject of so much surmise and perplexity. Sir Henry in his cruise along the coast had been repeatedly foiled by Lee. First, as we have shown, when he looked in at New York; next, when he paused at Norfolk in Virginia; and lastly, when he made a bold attempt at Charleston in South Carolina; for scarce did his ships appear off the bar of the harbour than the omnipresent Lee was marching his troops into the city.

Within a year past, Charleston had been fortified at various points. Fort Johnson, on James Island, three miles from the city, and commanding the breadth of the channel, was garrisoned by a regiment of South Carolina regulars, under Colonel Gadsden. A strong fort had recently been constructed nearly opposite, on the southwest point of Sullivan's Island, about six miles below the

[1] Am. Archives, 4th Series, v. 1112.

city. It was mounted with twenty-six guns, and garrisoned by three hundred and seventy-five regulars and a few militia, and commanded by Colonel William Moultrie, of South Carolina, who had constructed it. This fort, in connection with that on James Island, was considered the key of the harbour.

Cannon had also been mounted on Haddrell's Point, on the mainland, to the north-west of Sullivan's Island, and along the bay in front of the town.

The arrival of General Lee gave great joy to the people of Charleston, from his high reputation for military skill and experience. According to his own account, in a letter to Washington, the town on his arrival was "utterly defenceless." He was rejoiced, therefore, when the enemy, instead of immediately attacking it, directed his whole force against the fort on Sullivan's Island. "He has lost an opportunity," said Lee, "(such as I hope will never occur again) of taking the town."

The British ships, in fact, having passed the bar with some difficulty, landed their troops on Long Island, situated to the east of Sullivan's Island, and separated from it by a small creek called the Breach. Sir Henry Clinton meditated a combined attack with his land and naval forces on the fort commanded by Moultrie; the capture of which, he thought, would insure the reduction of Charleston.

The Americans immediately threw up works on the north-eastern extremity of Sullivan's Island, to prevent the passage of the enemy over the Breach, stationing a force of regulars and militia there, under Colonel Thompson. General Lee encamped on Haddrell's Point, on the mainland, to the north of the island, whence he intended to keep up a communication by a bridge of boats, so as to be ready at any moment to aid either Moultrie or Thompson.

Sir Henry Clinton, on the other hand, had to construct batteries on Long Island, to oppose those of Thompson and cover the passage of his troops by boats or by the ford. Thus time was consumed, and the enemy were, from the 1st to the 28th of June, preparing for the attack; their troops suffering from the intense heat of the sun on the burning sands of Long Island, and both fleet and army complaining of brackish water and scanty and bad provisions.

At length on the 28th of June, the Thunder bomb commenced the attack, throwing shells at the fort as the fleet, under Sir Peter Parker, advanced. About eleven o'clock the ships dropped their anchors directly before the front battery. "I was at this time in a boat," writes Lee, "endeavouring to make the island; but the wind and tide being violently against us, drove us on the main. They immediately commenced the most furious fire I ever heard or saw. I confess I was in pain, from the little confidence I reposed in our troops; the officers being all boys, and the men raw recruits. What augmented my anxiety was, that we had no bridge finished for retreat or communication; and the creek or cove which separates it from the continent is near a mile wide. I had received, likewise, intelligence that their land troops intended at the same time to land and assault. I never in my life felt myself so uneasy; and what added to my uneasiness was, that I knew our stock of ammunition was miserably low. I had once thought of ordering the commanding officer to spike his guns, and, when his ammunition was spent, to retreat with as little loss as possible. However, I thought proper previously to send to town for a fresh supply, if it could possibly be procured, and ordered my aide-de-camp, Mr. Byrd (who is a lad of magnanimous courage), to pass over in a small canoe, and report the state of the spirit of the garrison. If it had been low, I should have abandoned all thoughts of defence. His report was flattering. I then determined to maintain the post at all risks, and passed the creek or cove in a small boat, in order to animate the garrison in *propriâ personâ*; but I found they had no occasion for such an encouragement.

"They were pleased with my visit, and assured me they never would abandon the post but with their lives. The cool courage they displayed astonished and enraptured me, for I do assure you, my dear general, I never experienced a better fire. Twelve full hours it was continued without intermission. The noble fellows who were mortally wounded conjured their brethren never to abandon the standard of liberty. Those who lost their limbs deserted not their posts. Upon the whole, they acted like Romans in the third century."

Much of the foregoing is corroborated by the statement of a British historian. "While the continued fire of our ships," writes he, "seemed sufficient to shake the fierceness of the bravest enemy, and daunt the courage of the most veteran soldier, the return made by the fort could not fail calling for the respect as well as of highly incommoding the brave seamen of Britain. In the midst of that dreadful roar of artillery they stuck with the greatest constancy and firmness to their guns, fired deliberately and slowly, and took a cool and effective aim. The ships suffered accordingly, they were torn almost to pieces, and the slaughter was dreadful. Never did British valour shine more conspicuous, and never did our marine, in an engagement of the same nature with any foreign enemy, experience so rude an encounter."[1]

The fire from the ships did not produce the expected effect. The fortifications were low, composed of earth and palmetto wood, which is soft, and makes no splinters, and the merlons were extremely thick. At one time there was a considerable pause in the American fire, and the enemy thought the fort was abandoned. It was only because the powder was exhausted. As soon as a supply could be forwarded from the mainland by General Lee the fort resumed its fire with still more deadly effect. Through unskilful pilotage several of the ships ran aground, where one, the frigate 'Acteon,' remained; the rest were extricated with difficulty. Those which bore the brunt of the action were much cut up. One hundred and seventy-five men were killed, and nearly as many wounded. Captain Scott, commanding the 'Experiment,' of fifty guns, lost an arm, and was otherwise wounded. Captain Morris, commanding the 'Acteon,' was slain. So also was Lord Campbell, late governor of the province, who served as a volunteer on board of the squadron.

Sir Henry Clinton, with two thousand troops and five or six hundred seamen, attempted repeatedly to cross from Long Island and co-operate in the attack upon the fort, but was as often foiled by Colonel Thompson with his battery of two cannons and a body of South Carolina rangers

[1] Hist. Civil War in America. Dublin, 1779. Annual Register.

and North Carolina regulars. "Upon the whole," says Lee, "the South and North Carolina troops and Virginia rifle battalion we have here are admirable soldiers."

The combat slackened before sunset, and ceased before ten o'clock. Sir Peter Parker, who had received a severe contusion in the engagement, then slipped his cables and drew off his shattered ships to Five Fathom Hole. The 'Acteon' remained aground.

On the following morning Sir Henry Clinton made another attempt to cross from Long Island to Sullivan's Island, but was again repulsed, and obliged to take shelter behind his breastworks. Sir Peter Parker, too, giving up all hope of reducing the fort, in the shattered condition of his ships, ordered that the 'Acteon' should be set on fire and abandoned. The crew left her in flames, with the guns loaded and the colours flying. The Americans boarded her in time to haul down her colours and secure them as a trophy, discharge her guns at one of the enemy's ships, and load three boats with stores. They then abandoned her to her fate, and in half an hour she blew up.

Within a few days the troops were re-embarked from Long Island; the attempt upon Charleston was for the present abandoned, and the fleet once more put to sea.

In this action—one of the severest in the whole course of the war—the loss of the Americans in killed and wounded was but thirty-five men. Colonel Moultrie derived the greatest glory from the defence of Sullivan's Island; though the thanks of Congress were voted as well to General Lee, Colonel Thompson, and those under their command.

"For God's sake, my dear general," writes Lee to Washington, "urge the Congress to furnish me with a thousand cavalry. With a thousand cavalry I could insure the safety of these southern provinces; and without cavalry I can answer for nothing. From want of this species of troops we had infallibly lost this capital, but the dilatoriness and stupidity of the enemy saved us."

The tidings of this signal repulse of the enemy came most opportunely to Washington, when he was apprehending an attack upon New York. He writes in a familiar vein to Schuyler on the subject. "Sir Peter Parker and his fleet got a severe drubbing in an attack upon our works

on Sullivan's Island, just by Charleston, in South Carolina; a part of their troops, at the same time, in attempting to land, were repulsed." He assumed a different tone in announcing it to the army in a general order of the 21st July. "This generous example of our troops, under the like circumstances with us, the general hopes will animate every officer and soldier to imitate, and even outdo them, when the enemy shall make the same attempt on us. With such a bright example before us of what can be done by brave men fighting in defence of their country, we shall be loaded with a double share of shame and infamy if we do not acquit ourselves with courage, and manifest a determined resolution to conquer or die."

CHAPTER LXXII.

Putnam's Military Projects—Chevaux-de-frise at Fort Washington—Meditated Attack on Staten Island—Arrival of Ships — Hessian Reinforcements—Scotch Highlanders—Sir Henry Clinton and Lord Cornwallis—Putnam's Obstructions of the Hudson—The 'Phœnix' and 'Rose' attacked by Row Galleys at Tarrytown—General Order of Washington on the subject of Sectional Jealousies — Profane Swearing prohibited in the Camp—Preparations against Attack—Levies of Yeomanry—George Clinton in command of the Levies along the Hudson—Alarms of the People of New York—Benevolent Sympathy of Washington—The 'Phœnix' grappled by a Fire-ship—The Ships evacuate the Hudson.

General Putnam, beside his bravery in the field, was somewhat of a mechanical projector. The batteries at Fort Washington had proved ineffectual in opposing the passage of hostile ships up the Hudson. He was now engaged on a plan for obstructing the channel opposite the fort, so as to prevent the passing of any more ships. A letter from him to General Gates (July 26th) explains his project. "We are preparing chevaux-de-frise, at which we make great despatch by the help of ships, which are to be sunk —a scheme of mine which you may be assured is very simple; a plan of which I send you. The two ships' sterns lie towards each other, about seventy feet apart. Three large logs, which reach from ship to ship, are fastened to them. The two ships and logs stop the river two hundred and eighty feet. The ships are to be sunk, and when

hauled down on one side, the pricks will be raised to a proper height, and they must inevitably stop the river, if the enemy will let us sink them."

It so happened that one Ephraim Anderson, adjutant to the second Jersey battalion, had recently submitted a project to Congress for destroying the enemy's fleet in the harbour of New York. He had attempted an enterprise of the kind against the British ships in the harbour of Quebec during the siege, and, according to his own account, would have succeeded, had not the enemy discovered his intentions, and stretched a cable across the mouth of the harbour, and had he not accidentally been much burnt.

His scheme was favourably entertained by Congress, and Washington, by a letter dated July 10th, was instructed to aid him in carrying it into effect. Anderson, accordingly, was soon at work at New York constructing fire-ships, with which the fleet was to be attacked. Simultaneous with the attack, a descent was to be made on the British camp on Staten Island, from the nearest point of the Jersey shore, by troops from Mercer's flying-camp, and by others stationed at Bergen under Major Knowlton, Putnam's favourite officer for daring enterprises.

Putnam entered into the scheme as zealously as if it had been his own. Indeed, by the tenour of his letter to Gates, already quoted, he seemed almost to consider it so. "The enemy's fleet," writes he, "now lies in the bay, close under Staten Island. Their troops possess no land here but the island. Is it not strange that those invincible troops, who were to lay waste all this country with their fleets and army, are so fond of islands and peninsulas, and dare not put their feet on the main? But I hope, by the blessing of God, and good friends, we shall pay them a visit on their island. For that end we are preparing fourteen fire-ships to go into their fleet, some of which are ready charged and fitted to sail, and I hope soon to have them all fixed."

Anderson, also, on the 31st July, writes from New York to the President of Congress: "I have been for some time past very assiduous in the preparation of fire-ships. Two are already complete, and hauled off into the stream; two more will be off to-morrow, and the residue in a very short time. In my next, I hope to give you a particular account

of a general conflagration, as everything in my power shall be exerted for the demolition of the enemy's fleet. I expect to take an active part, and be an instrument for that purpose. I am determined (God willing) to make a conspicuous figure among them, by being a 'burning and shining light,' and thereby serve my country, and have the honour of meeting the approbation of Congress."[1]

Projectors are subject to disappointments. It was impossible to construct a sufficient number of fire-ships and galleys in time. The flying-camp, too, recruited but slowly, and scarcely exceeded three thousand men; the combined attack by fire and sword had therefore to be given up, and the "burning and shining light" again failed of conflagration.

Still, a partial night attack on the Staten Island encampment was concerted by Mercer and Knowlton, and twice attempted. On one occasion they were prevented from crossing the strait by tempestuous weather, on another by deficiency of boats.

In the course of a few days arrived a hundred sail, with large reinforcements, among which were one thousand Hessians, and as many more were reported to be on the way. The troops were disembarked on Staten Island, and fortifications thrown up on some of the most commanding hills.

All projects of attack upon the enemy were now out of the question. Indeed, some of Washington's ablest advisers questioned the policy of remaining in New York, where they might be entrapped as the British had been in Boston. Reed, the adjutant-general, observed that, as the communication by the Hudson was interrupted, there was nothing now to keep them at New York but a mere point of honour; in the meantime, they endangered the loss of the army and its military stores. Why should they risk so much in defending a city, while the greater part of its inhabitants were plotting their destruction? His advice was, that when they could defend the city no longer, they should evacuate and burn it, and retire from Manhattan Island; should avoid any general action, or indeed any

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, i. 155.

action, unless in view of great advantages; and should make it a war of posts.

During the latter part of July and the early part of August, ships of war with their tenders continued to arrive, and Scotch Highlanders, Hessians, and other troops to be landed on Staten Island. At the beginning of August, the squadron with Sir Henry Clinton, recently repulsed at Charleston, anchored in the bay. "His coming," writes Colonel Reed, "was as unexpected as if he had dropped from the clouds." He was accompanied by Lord Cornwallis, and brought three thousand troops.

In the mean time, Putnam's contrivances for obstructing the channel had reached their destined place. A letter dated Fort Washington, August 3rd, says: "Four ships chained and boomed, with a number of amazing large chevaux-de-frise, were sunk close by the fort under command of General Mifflin, which fort mounts thirty-two pieces of heavy cannon. We are thoroughly sanguine that they [the ships up the river] never will be able to join the British fleet, nor assistance from the fleet be afforded to them; so that we may set them down as our own."

Another letter, written at the same date from Tarrytown, on the borders of the Tappan Sea, gives an account of an attack made by six row-galleys, upon the 'Phœnix' and 'Rose.' They fought bravely for two hours, hulling the ships repeatedly, but sustaining great damage in return; until their commodore, Colonel Tupper, gave the signal to draw off. "Never," says the writer, "did men behave with more firm, determined spirit, than our little crews. One of our tars, being mortally wounded, cried to his companions: 'I am a dying man; revenge my blood, my boys, and carry me alongside my gun, that I may die there.' We were so preserved by a gracious Providence, that in all our galleys we had but two men killed and fourteen wounded, two of which are thought dangerous. We hope to have another touch at those pirates before they leave our river; which God prosper!"

Such was the belligerent spirit prevailing up the Hudson.

The force of the enemy collected in the neighbourhood of New York was about thirty thousand men; that of the

Americans a little more than seventeen thousand, but was subsequently increased to twenty thousand, for the most part raw and undisciplined. One-fourth were on the sick list with bilious and putrid fevers and dysentery; others were absent on furlough or command; the rest had to be distributed over posts and stations fifteen miles apart.

The sectional jealousies prevalent among them, were more and more a subject of uneasiness to Washington. In one of his general orders he observes: "It is with great concern that the general understands that jealousies have arisen among the troops from the different provinces, and reflections are frequently thrown out which can only tend to irritate each other, and injure the noble cause in which we are engaged, and which we ought to support with one hand and one heart. The general most earnestly entreats the officers and soldiers to consider the consequences; that they can no way assist our enemies more effectually than by making divisions among ourselves; that the honour and success of the army, and the safety of our bleeding country, depend upon harmony and good agreement with each other; that the provinces are all united to oppose the common enemy, and all distinctions sunk in the name of an American. To make this name honourable, and to preserve the liberty of our country, ought to be our only emulation; and he will be the best soldier and the best patriot, who contributes most to this glorious work, whatever be his station, or from whatever part of the continent he may come. Let all distinction of nations, countries and provinces, therefore, be lost in the generous contest, who shall behave with the most courage against the enemy, and the most kindness and good-humour to each other. If there be any officers or soldiers so lost to virtue and a love of their country, as to continue in such practices after this order, the general assures them, and is authorized by Congress to declare to the whole army, that such persons shall be severely punished, and dismissed from the service with disgrace."

The urgency of such a general order is apparent in that early period of our confederation, when its various parts had not as yet been sufficiently welded together to acquire

a thorough feeling of nationality; yet what an enduring lesson does it furnish for every stage of our Union!

We subjoin another of the general orders issued in this time of gloom and anxiety:—

"That the troops may have an opportunity of attending public worship, as well as to take some rest after the great fatigue they have gone through, the general, in future, excuses them from fatigue duty on Sundays, except at the ship-yards, or on special occasions, until further orders. The general is sorry to be informed, that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice heretofore little known in an American army, is growing into fashion. He hopes the officers will, by example as well as influence, endeavour to check it, and that both they and the men will reflect, that we can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms, if we insult it by our impiety and folly. Added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without any temptation, that every man of sense and character detests and despises it."[1]

While Washington thus endeavoured to elevate the minds of his soldiery to the sanctity of the cause in which they were engaged, he kept the most watchful eye upon the movements of the enemy. Beside their great superiority in point of numbers as well as discipline, to his own crude and scanty legions, they possessed a vast advantage in their fleet. "They would not be half the enemy they are," observed Colonel Reed, "if they were once separated from their ships." Every arrival and departure of these, therefore, was a subject of speculation and conjecture. Aaron Burr, at that time in New York, aide-de-camp to General Putnam, speaks, in a letter to an uncle, of thirty transports, which, under convoy of three frigates, had put to sea on the 7th of August, with the intention of sailing round Long Island and coming through the Sound, and thus investing the city by the North and East Rivers. "They are then to land on both sides of the island," writes he, "join their forces, and draw a line across, which will hem us in, and totally cut off all communication; after which, they will have their own fun." He

[1] Orderly Book, Aug. 3, as cited by Sparks. Writings of Washington, vol. iv. p. 28.

adds: "They hold us in the utmost contempt. Talk of forcing all our lines without firing a gun. The bayonet is their pride. They have forgot Bunker's Hill."[1]

In this emergency, Washington wrote to General Mercer for 2,000 men from the flying camp. Colonel Smallwood's battalion was immediately furnished as a part of them. The Convention of the State ordered out hasty levies of country militia, to form temporary camps on the shore of the Sound, and on that of the Hudson above King's Bridge, to annoy the enemy, should they attempt to land from their ships on either of these waters. Others were sent to reinforce the posts on Long Island. As King's County on Long Island was noted for being a stronghold of the disaffected, the Convention ordered that should any of the militia of that county refuse to serve, they should be disarmed and secured, and their possessions laid waste.

Many of the yeomen of the country, thus hastily summoned from the plough, were destitute of arms; in lieu of which they were ordered to bring with them a shovel, spade, or pickaxe, or a scythe straightened and fastened to a pole. This rustic army may have provoked the thoughtless sneers of city scoffers, such as those cited by Graydon; but it was in truth one of the glorious features of the Revolution, to be thus aided in its emergencies by "hasty levies of husbandmen."[2]

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, i. 887.

[2] General orders, Aug. 8th, show the feverish state of affairs in the city. "As the movements of the enemy, and intelligence by deserters, give the utmost reason to believe that the great struggle in which we are contending for everything dear to us and our posterity is near at hand, the general most earnestly recommends the closest attention to the state of the men's arms, ammunition, and flints; that if we should be suddenly called to action, nothing of this kind may be to provide. And he does most anxiously exhort both officers and soldiers not to be out of their quarters or encampments, especially in the morning, or upon the tide of flood.

"A flag in the daytime, or a light at night, in the fort on Bayard's Hill, with three guns from the same place fired quick but distinct, is to be considered as a signal for the troops to repair to their alarm posts, and prepare for action. And that the alarm may be more effectually given, the drums are immediately to beat to arms upon the signal being given from Bayard's Hill. This order is not to be considered as countermanding the firing two guns at Fort George, as formerly ordered. That is also to be done on an alarm, but the flag will not be hoisted at the old head-quarters in Broadway."—*Am. Archives*, 5th Series, i. 912.

By the authority of the New York Convention, Washington had appointed General George Clinton to the command of the levies on both sides of the Hudson. He now ordered him to hasten down with them to the fort just erected on the north side of King's Bridge, leaving two hundred men under the command of a brave and alert officer to throw up works at the pass of Anthony's Nose, where the main road to Albany crosses that mountain. Troops of horse also were to be posted by him along the river, to watch the motions of the enemy.

Washington now made the last solemn preparations for the impending conflict. All suspected persons, whose presence might promote the plans of the enemy, were removed to a distance. All papers respecting affairs of State were put up in a large case, to be delivered to Congress. As to his domestic arrangements, Mrs. Washington had some time previously gone to Philadelphia, with the intention of returning to Virginia, as there was no prospect of her being with him any part of the summer, which threatened to be one of turmoil and danger. The other ladies, wives of general officers, who used to grace and enliven head-quarters, had all been sent out of the way of the storm which was lowering over this devoted city.

Accounts of deserters, and other intelligence, informed Washington on the 17th, that a great many of the enemy's troops had gone on board of the transports; that three days' provisions had been cooked, and other steps taken, indicating an intention of leaving Staten Island. Putnam, also, came up from below, with word that at least one-fourth of the fleet had sailed. There were many conjectures at head-quarters, as to whither they were bound, or whether they had not merely shifted their station; everything indicated, however, that affairs were tending to a crisis.

The "hysterical alarms" of the peaceful inhabitants of New York, which had provoked the soldierlike impatience and satirical sneers of Lee, inspired different sentiments in the benevolent heart of Washington, and produced the following letter to the New York Convention:—

"When I consider that the city of New York will, in all human probability, very soon be the scene of a bloody conflict, I cannot but view the great numbers of women, chil-

dren, and infirm persons remaining in it, with the most melancholy concern. When the men-of-war (the 'Phœnix' and 'Rose') passed up the river, the shrieks and cries of these poor creatures running every way with their children, were truly distressing, and I fear they will have an unhappy effect upon the ears and minds of our young and inexperienced soldiery. Can no method be devised for their removal?"

How vividly does this call to mind the compassionate sensibility of his younger days, when commanding at Winchester, in Virginia, in time of public peril; and melted to "deadly sorrow" by the "supplicating tears of the women, and moving petitions of the men." As then, he listened to the prompt suggestions of his own heart; and, without awaiting the action of the Convention, issued a proclamation, advising the inhabitants to remove, and requiring the officers and soldiery to aid the helpless and the indigent. The Convention soon responded to his appeal, and appointed a committee to effect these purposes in the most humane and expeditious manner.

A gallant little exploit at this juncture, gave a fillip to the spirits of the community. Two of the fire-ships recently constructed, went up the Hudson to attempt the destruction of the ships which had so long been domineering over its waters. One succeeded in grappling the 'Phœnix,' and would soon have set her in flames, but in the darkness got to leeward, and was cast loose without effecting any damage. The other, in making for the 'Rose,' fell foul of one of the tenders, grappled, and burnt her. The enterprise was conducted with spirit, and though it failed of its main object, had an important effect. The commanders of the ships determined to abandon those waters where their boats were fired upon by the very yeomanry whenever they attempted to land, and where their ships were in danger from midnight incendiaries while riding at anchor. Taking advantage of a brisk wind and favouring tide, they made all sail early on the morning of the 18th of August, and stood down the river, keeping close under the eastern shore, where they supposed the guns from Mount Washington could not be brought to bear upon them. Notwithstanding this precaution, the 'Phœ-

nix' was thrice hulled by shots from the fort, and one of the tenders once. The 'Rose,' also, was hulled once by a shot from Burdett's Ferry. The men on board were kept close, to avoid being picked off by a party of riflemen posted on the river bank. The ships fired grape-shot as they passed, but without effecting any injury. Unfortunately a passage had been left open in the obstructions on which General Putnam had calculated so sanguinely; it was to have been closed in the course of a day or two. Through this they made their way, guided by a deserter; which alone, in Putnam's opinion, saved them from being checked in their career, and utterly destroyed by the batteries.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

The Battle of Long Island.

The movements of the British fleet, and of the camp on Staten Island, gave signs of a meditated attack; but as the nature of that attack was uncertain, Washington was obliged to retain the greater part of his troops in the city for its defence, holding them ready, however, to be transferred to any point in the vicinity. General Mifflin, with about five hundred of the Pennsylvania troops, of Colonels Shee and Magaw's regiments, was at King's Bridge, ready to aid at a moment's notice. "They are the best disciplined of any troops that I have yet seen in the army," said General Heath, who had just reviewed them. General George Clinton was at that post, with about fourteen hundred of his yeomanry of the Hudson. As the 'Phœnix' and 'Rose' had explored the shores, and taken the soundings as far as they had gone up the river, General Heath thought Howe might attempt an attack somewhere above King's Bridge, rather than in the face of the many and strong works erected in and around the city. "Should his inclination lead him this way," adds he, "nature has done much for us, and we shall, as fast as possible, add the strength of art. We are pushing our works with great diligence."[1]

[1] Heath to Washington, Aug. 17–18.

Reports from different quarters gave Washington reason to apprehend that the design of the enemy might be to land part of their force on Long Island, and endeavour to get possession of the heights of Brooklyn, which overlooked New York; while another part should land above the city, as General Heath suggested. Thus, various disconnected points, distant from each other, and a great extent of intervening country, had to be defended by raw troops, against a superior force, well disciplined, and possessed of every facility for operating by land and water.

General Greene, with a considerable force, was stationed at Brooklyn. He had acquainted himself with all the localities of the island, from Hell Gate to the Narrows, and made his plan of defence accordingly. His troops were diligently occupied on works which he laid out, about a mile beyond the village of Brooklyn, and facing the interior of the island, whence a land attack might be attempted.

Brooklyn was immediately opposite to New York. The Sound, commonly called the East River, in that place about three quarters of a mile in width, swept its rapid tides between them. The village stood on a kind of peninsula, formed by the deep inlets of Wallabout Bay on the north, and Gowanus Cove on the south. A line of intrenchments and strong redoubts extended across the neck of the peninsula, from the bay to a swamp and creek emptying into the cove. To protect the rear of the works from the enemy's ships, a battery was erected at Red Hook, the south-west corner of the peninsula, and a fort on Governor's Island, nearly opposite.

About two miles and a half in front of the line of intrenchments and redoubts, a range of hills, densely wooded, extended from south-west to north-east, forming a natural barrier across the island. It was traversed by three roads. One, on the left of the works, stretched eastwardly to Bedford, and then by a pass through the Bedford Hills to the village of Jamaica; another, central and direct, led through the woody heights to Flatbush; a third, on the right of the lines, passed by Gowanus Cove to the Narrows and Gravesend Bay.

The occupation of this range of hills, and the protection

of its passes, had been designed by General Greene; but, unfortunately, in the midst of his arduous toils, he was taken down by a raging fever, which confined him to his bed; and General Sullivan, just returned from Lake Champlain, had the temporary command.

Washington saw, that to prevent the enemy from landing on Long Island would be impossible, its great extent affording so many places favourable for that purpose, and the American works being at the part opposite to New York. "However," writes he to the President of Congress, "we shall attempt to harass them as much as possible, which is all that we can do."

On the 21st came a letter, written in all haste by Brigadier-general William Livingston, of New Jersey. Movements of the enemy on Staten Island had been seen from his camp. He had sent over a spy at midnight, who brought back the following intelligence. Twenty thousand men had embarked to make an attack on Long Island, and up the Hudson. Fifteen thousand remained on Staten Island, to attack Bergen Point, Elizabethtown Point, and Amboy. The spy declared that he had heard the orders read, and the conversation of the generals. "They appear very determined," added he, "and will put all to the sword!"

Washington sent a copy of the letter to the New York Convention. On the following morning (August 22nd) the enemy appeared to be carrying their plans into execution. The reports of cannon and musketry were heard from Long Island, and columns of smoke were descried rising above the groves and orchards at a distance. The city, as usual, was alarmed, and had reason to be so; for word soon came that several thousand men, with artillery and light-horse, were landed at Gravesend; and that Colonel Hand, stationed there with the Pennsylvania rifle regiment, had retreated to the lines, setting fire to stacks of wheat, and other articles, to keep them from falling into the enemy's hands.

Washington apprehended an attempt of the foe by a forced march, to surprise the lines at Brooklyn. He immediately sent over a reinforcement of six battalions. It was all that he could spare, as with the next tide the ships

might bring up the residue of the army, and attack the city. Five battalions more, however, were ordered to be ready as a reinforcement, if required. "Be cool, but determined," was the exhortation given to the departing troops. "Do not fire at a distance, but wait the commands of your officers. It is the general's express orders, that if any man attempt to skulk, lie down, or retreat without orders, he be instantly shot down for an example."

In justice to the poor fellows, most of whom were going for the first time on a service of life and death, Washington observes, that "they went off in high spirits," and that the whole capable of duty evinced the same cheerfulness.[1]

Nine thousand of the enemy had landed, with forty pieces of cannon. Sir Henry Clinton had the chief command, and led the first division. His associate officers were the Earls of Cornwallis and Percy, General Grant, and General Sir William Erskine. As their boats approached the shore, Colonel Hand, stationed, as has been said, in the neighbourhood with his rifle regiment, retreated to the chain of wooded hills, and took post on a height commanding the central road leading from Flatbush. The enemy having landed without opposition, Lord Cornwallis was detached with the reserve to Flatbush, while the rest of the army extended itself from the ferry at the Narrows through Utrecht and Gravesend, to the village of Flatland.

Lord Cornwallis, with two battalions of light-infantry, Colonel Donop's corps of Hessians, and six field-pieces, advanced rapidly to seize upon the central pass through the hills. He found Hand and his riflemen ready to make a vigorous defence. This brought him to a halt, having been ordered not to risk an attack should the pass be occupied. He took post for the night, therefore, in the village of Flatbush.

It was evidently the aim of the enemy to force the lines at Brooklyn, and get possession of the heights. Should they succeed, New York would be at their mercy. The panic and distress of the inhabitants went on increasing. Most of those who could afford it, had already removed to the country. There was now a new cause of terror. It

[1] Washington to the President of Congress.

was rumoured that, should the American army retreat from the city, leave would be given for any one to set it on fire. The New York Convention apprised Washington of this rumour, "I can assure you, gentlemen," writes he in reply, "that this report is not founded on the least authority from me. On the contrary, I am so sensible of the value of such a city, and the consequences of its destruction to many worthy citizens and their families, that nothing but the last necessity, and that such as would justify me to the whole world, would induce me to give orders to that purpose."

In this time of general alarm, head-quarters were besieged by applicants for safeguard from the impending danger; and Washington was even beset in his walks by supplicating women with their children. The patriot's heart throbbed feelingly under the soldier's belt. Nothing could surpass the patience and benignant sympathy with which he listened to them, and endeavoured to allay their fears. Again he urged the Convention to carry out their measures for the removal of these defenceless beings. "There are many," writes he, "who anxiously wish to remove, but have not the means."

On the 24th, he crossed over to Brooklyn, to inspect the lines and reconnoitre the neighbourhood. In this visit he felt sensibly the want of General Greene's presence, to explain his plans and point out the localities.

The American advanced posts were in the wooded hills. Colonel Hand, with his riflemen, kept watch over the central road, and a strong redoubt had been thrown up in front of the pass, to check any advance of the enemy from Flatbush. Another road leading from Flatbush to Bedford, by which the enemy might get round to the left of the works at Brooklyn, was guarded by two regiments, one under Colonel Williams, posted on the north side of the ridge, the other by a Pennsylvania rifle regiment, under Colonel Miles, posted on the south side. The enemy were stretched along the country beyond the chain of hills.

As yet, nothing had taken place but skirmishing and irregular firing between the outposts. It was with deep concern Washington noticed a prevalent disorder and confusion in the camp. There was a want of system among

the officers, and co-operation among the troops, each corps seeming to act independently of the rest. Few of the men had any military experience, except, perchance, in bush-fighting with Indians. Unaccustomed to discipline and the restraint of camps, they sallied forth whenever they pleased, singly or in squads, prowling about and firing upon the enemy, like hunters after game.

Much of this was no doubt owing to the protracted illness of General Greene.

On returning to the city, therefore, Washington gave the command on Long Island to General Putnam, warning him, however, in his letter of instructions, to summon the officers together, and enjoin them to put a stop to the irregularities which he had observed among the troops. Lines of defence were to be formed round the encampment, and works on the most advantageous ground. Guards were to be stationed on the lines with a brigadier of the day constantly at hand to see that orders were executed. Field-officers were to go the rounds and report the situation of the guards, and no one was to pass beyond the lines without a special permit in writing. At the same time, partisan and scouting parties, under proper officers, and with regular license, might sally forth to harass the enemy, and prevent their carrying off the horses and cattle of the country people.

Especial attention was called to the wooded hills between the works and the enemy's camp. The passes through them were to be secured by *abattis*, and defended by the best troops, who should, at all hazards, prevent the approach of the enemy. The militia being the least tutored and experienced, might man the interior works.

Putnam crossed with alacrity to his post. "He was made happy," writes Colonel Reed, "by obtaining leave to go over. The brave old man was quite miserable at being kept here."

In the mean time, the enemy were augmenting their forces on the island. Two brigades of Hessians, under Lieutenant-general De Heister, were transferred from the camp on Staten Island on the 25th. This movement did not escape the vigilant eye of Washington. By the aid of his telescope, he had noticed that from time to time tents

were struck on Staten Island, and portions of the encampment broken up; while ship after ship weighed anchor, and dropped down to the Narrows.

He now concluded that the enemy were about to make a push with their main force for the possession of Brooklyn Heights. He accordingly sent over additional reinforcements, and among them Colonel John Haslet's well-equipped and well-disciplined Delaware regiment; which was joined to Lord Stirling's brigade, chiefly composed of Southern troops, and stationed outside of the lines. These were troops which Washington regarded with peculiar satisfaction, on account of their soldier-like appearance and discipline.

On the 26th, he crossed over to Brooklyn, accompanied by Reed, the adjutant-general. There was much movement among the enemy's troops, and their number was evidently augmented. In fact, General De Heister had reached Flatbush with his Hessians, and taken command of the centre; whereupon Sir Henry Clinton, with the right wing, drew off to Flatlands, in a diagonal line to the right of De Heister, while the left wing, commanded by General Grant, extended to the place of landing on Gravesend Bay.

Washington remained all day, aiding General Putnam with his counsels, who, new to the command, had not been able to make himself well acquainted with the fortified posts beyond the lines. In the evening, Washington returned to the city, full of anxious thought. A general attack was evidently at hand. Where would it be made? How would his inexperienced troops stand the encounter? What would be the defence of the city if assailed by the ships? It was a night of intense solicitude, and well might it be; for during that night a plan was carried into effect, fraught with disaster to the Americans.

The plan to which we allude was concerted by General Howe, the commander-in-chief. Sir Henry Clinton with the vanguard, composed of the choicest troops, was, by a circuitous march in the night, to throw himself into the road leading from Jamaica to Bedford, seize upon a pass through the Bedford Hills, within three miles of that village, and thus turn the left of the American advanced

posts. It was preparatory to this nocturnal march, that Sir Henry during the day had fallen back with his troops from Flatbush to Flatlands, and caused that stir and movement which had attracted the notice of Washington.

To divert the attention of the Americans from this stealthy march on their left, General Grant was to menace their right flank toward Gravesend before daybreak, and General De Heister to cannonade their centre, where Colonel Hand was stationed. Neither, however, was to press an attack until the guns of Sir Henry Clinton should give notice that he had effected his purpose, and turned the left flank of the Americans; then the latter were to be assailed at all points with the utmost vigour.

About nine o'clock in the evening of the 26th, Sir Henry Clinton began his march from Flatlands with the vanguard, composed of light infantry. Lord Percy followed with the grenadiers, artillery, and light dragoons, forming the centre. Lord Cornwallis brought up the rear-guard, with the heavy ordnance. General Howe accompanied this division.

It was a silent march, without beat of drum or sound of trumpet, under guidance of a Long Island Tory, along by-roads traversing a swamp by a narrow causeway, and so across the country to the Jamaica road. About two hours before daybreak, they arrived within half a mile of the pass through the Bedford Hills, and halted to prepare for an attack. At this juncture they captured an American patrol, and learnt, to their surprise, that the Bedford pass was unoccupied. In fact, the whole road beyond Bedford, leading to Jamaica, had been left unguarded, excepting by some light volunteer troops. Colonels Williams and Miles, who were stationed to the left of Colonel Hand, among the wooded hills, had been instructed to send out parties occasionally to patrol the road, but no troops had been stationed at the Bedford pass. The road and pass may not have been included in General Greene's plan of defence, or may have been thought too far out of the way to need special precaution. The neglect of them, however, proved fatal.

Sir Henry Clinton immediately detached a battalion of light infantry to secure the pass; and, advancing with his

corps at the first break of day, possessed himself of the heights. He was now within three miles of Bedford, and his march had been undiscovered. Having passed the heights, therefore, he halted his division for the soldiers to take some refreshment, preparatory to the morning's hostilities.

There we will leave them, while we note how the other divisions performed their part of the plan.

About midnight General Grant moved from Gravesend Bay, with the left wing, composed of two brigades and a regiment of regulars, a battalion of New York loyalists, and ten field-pieces. He proceeded along the road leading past the Narrows and Gowanus Cove, towards the right of the American works. A picket guard of Pennsylvanian and New York Militia, under Colonel Atlee, retired before him fighting to a position on the skirts of the wooded hills.

In the mean time, scouts had brought in word to the American lines that the enemy were approaching in force upon the right. General Putnam instantly ordered Lord Stirling to hasten with the two regiments nearest at hand, and hold them in check. These were Haslet's Delaware, and Smallwood's Maryland regiments; the latter the *macaronis*, in scarlet and buff, who had outshone, in camp, their yeoman fellow-soldiers in homespun. They turned out with great alacrity, and Stirling pushed forward with them on the road towards the Narrows. By the time he had passed Gowanus Cove, daylight began to appear. Here, on a rising ground, he met Colonel Atlee with his Pennsylvania Provincials, and learned that the enemy were near. Indeed, their front began to appear in the uncertain twilight. Stirling ordered Atlee to place himself in ambush in an orchard on the left of the road, and await their coming up, while he formed the Delaware and Maryland regiments along a ridge from the road, up to a piece of woods on the top of the hill.

Atlee gave the enemy two or three volleys as they approached, and then retreated and formed in the wood on Lord Stirling's left. By this time his lordship was reinforced by Kichline's riflemen, part of whom he placed along a hedge at the foot of the hill, and part in front of

the wood. General Grant threw his light troops in the advance, and posted them in an orchard and behind hedges, extending in front of the Americans, and about one hundred and fifty yards distant.

It was now broad daylight. A rattling fire commenced between the British light troops and the American riflemen, which continued for about two hours, when the former retired to their main body. In the meantime, Stirling's position had been strengthened by the arrival of Captain Carpenter with two field-pieces. These were placed on the side of the hill, so as to command the road and the approach for some hundred yards. General Grant, likewise, brought up his artillery within three hundred yards, and formed his brigades on opposite hills, about six hundred yards distant. There was occasional cannonading on both sides, but neither party sought a general action.

Lord Stirling's object was merely to hold the enemy in check; and the instructions of General Grant, as we have shown, were not to press an attack until aware that Sir Henry Clinton was on the left flank of the Americans.

During this time, De Heister had commenced his part of the plan by opening a cannonade from his camp at Flatbush, upon the redoubt, at the pass of the wooded hills, where Hand and his riflemen were stationed. On hearing this, General Sullivan, who was within the lines, rode forth to Colonel Hand's post to reconnoitre. De Heister, however, according to the plan of operations, did not advance from Flatbush, but kept up a brisk fire from his artillery on the redoubt in front of the pass, which replied as briskly. At the same time, a cannonade from a British ship upon the battery at Red Hook contributed to distract the attention of the Americans.

In the meantime terror reigned in New York. The volleying of musketry and the booming of cannon at early dawn, had told of the fighting that had commenced. As the morning advanced, and platoon-firing and the occasional discharge of a field-piece were heard in different directions, the terror increased. Washington was still in doubt whether this was but a part of a general attack, in which the city was to be included. Five ships of the line were endeavouring to beat up the bay. Were they to cannonade

the city, or to land troops above it? Fortunately, a strong head-wind baffled their efforts; but one vessel of inferior force got up far enough to open the fire already mentioned upon the fort at Red Hook.

Seeing no likelihood of an immediate attack upon the city, Washington hastened over to Brooklyn in his barge, and galloped up to the works. He arrived there in time to witness the catastrophe for which all the movements of the enemy had been concerted.

The thundering of artillery in the direction of Bedford had given notice that Sir Henry had turned the left of the Americans. De Heister immediately ordered Colonel Count Donop to advance with his Hessian regiment, and storm the redoubt, while he followed with his whole division. Sullivan did not remain to defend the redoubt. Sir Henry's cannon had apprised him of the fatal truth, that his flank was turned, and he in danger of being surrounded. He ordered a retreat to the lines, but it was already too late. Scarce had he descended from the height, and emerged into the plain, when he was met by the British light infantry and dragoons, and driven back into the woods. By this time De Heister and his Hessians had come up, and now commenced a scene of confusion, consternation, and slaughter, in which the troops under Williams and Miles were involved. Hemmed in and entrapped between the British and Hessians, and driven from one to the other, the Americans fought for a time bravely, or rather desperately. Some were cut down and trampled by the cavalry, others bayoneted without mercy by the Hessians. Some rallied in groups, and made a brief stand with their rifles from rocks or behind trees. The whole pass was a scene of carnage, resounding with the clash of arms, the tramp of horses, the volleying of fire-arms, and the cries of the combatants, with now and then the dreary braying of the trumpet. We give the words of one who mingled in the fight, and whom we have heard speak with horror of the sanguinary fury with which the Hessians plied the bayonet. At length some of the Americans, by a desperate effort, cut their way through the host of foes, and effected a retreat to the lines, fighting as they went. Others took refuge among the woods and fastnesses of the hills,

but a great part were either killed or taken prisoners. Among the latter was General Sullivan.

Washington, as we have observed, arrived in time to witness this catastrophe, but was unable to prevent it. He had heard the din of the battle in the woods, and seen the smoke rising from among the trees; but a deep column of the enemy was descending from the hills on the left; his choicest troops were all in action, and he had none but militia to man the works. His solicitude was now awakened for the safety of Lord Stirling and his corps, who had been all the morning exchanging cannonades with General Grant. The forbearance of the latter in not advancing, though so superior in force, had been misinterpreted by the Americans. According to Colonel Haslet's statement, the Delawares and Marylanders, drawn up on the side of the hill, "stood upwards of four hours, with a firm and determined countenance, in close array, their colours flying, the enemy's artillery playing on them all the while, *not daring to advance and attack them*, though six times their number, and nearly surrounding them."[1]

Washington saw the danger to which these brave fellows were exposed, though they could not. Stationed on a hill within the lines, he commanded, with his telescope, a view of the whole field, and saw the enemy's reserve, under Cornwallis, marching down by a cross-road to get in at their rear, and thus place them between two fires. With breathless anxiety he watched the result.

The sound of Sir Henry Clinton's cannon apprised Stirling that the enemy was between him and the lines. General Grant, too, aware that the time had come for earnest action, was closing up, and had already taken Colonel Atlee prisoner. His lordship now thought to effect a circuitous retreat to the lines, by crossing the creek which empties into Gowanus Cove, near what was called the Yellow Mills. There was a bridge and mill-dam, and the creek might be forded at low water, but no time was to be lost, for the tide was rising.

Leaving part of his men to keep face toward General Grant, Stirling advanced with the rest to pass the creek,

[1] Atlee to Col. Rodney. Sparks, iv. 516.

but was suddenly checked by the appearance of Cornwallis and his grenadiers.

Washington and some of his officers on the hill, who watched every movement, had supposed that Stirling and his troops, finding the case desperate, would surrender in a body, without firing. On the contrary, his lordship boldly attacked Cornwallis with half of Smallwood's battalion, while the rest of his troops retreated across the creek. Washington wrung his hands in agony at the sight. "Good God!" cried he, "what brave fellows I must this day lose!"[1]

It was, indeed, a desperate fight; and now Smallwood's *macaronis* showed their game spirit. They were repeatedly broken, but as often rallied, and renewed the fight. "We were on the point of driving Lord Cornwallis from his station," writes Lord Stirling, "but large reinforcements arriving, rendered it impossible to do more than provide for safety."

"Being thus surrounded, and no probability of a reinforcement," writes a Maryland officer, "his lordship ordered me to retreat with the remaining part of our men, and force our way to our camp. We soon fell in with a party of the enemy, who clubbed their firelocks, and waved their hats to us as if they meant to surrender as prisoners; but on our advancing within sixty yards, they presented their pieces and fired, which we returned with so much warmth that they soon quitted their post, and retired to a large body that was lying in ambuscade."[2]

The enemy rallied, and returned to the combat with additional force. Only five companies of Smallwood's battalion were now in action. There was a warm and close engagement for nearly ten minutes. The struggle became desperate on the part of the Americans. Broken and disordered, they rallied in a piece of woods, and made a second attack. They were again overpowered with numbers. Some were surrounded and bayoneted in a field of Indian corn; others joined their comrades who were retreating across the marsh. Lord Stirling had encouraged and ani-

[1] Letter from an American officer. Am. Archives, 5th Series, ii. 108.
[2] Letter from a Marylander. Idem, 5th Series, i. 1232.

mated his young soldiers by his voice and example, but when all was lost, he sought out General De Heister, and surrendered himself as his prisoner.

More than two hundred and fifty brave fellows, most of them of Smallwood's regiment, perished in this deadly struggle, within sight of the lines of Brooklyn. That part of the Delaware troops who had first crossed the creek and swamp, made good their retreat to the lines with a trifling loss, and entered the camp covered with mud and drenched with water, but bringing with them twenty three prisoners, and their standard tattered by grape-shot.

The enemy now concentrated their forces within a few hundred yards of the redoubts. The grenadiers were within musket-shot. Washington expected they would storm the works, and prepared for a desperate defence. The discharge of a cannon and volleys of musketry from the part of the lines nearest to them, seemed to bring them to a pause.

It was, in truth, the forbearance of the British commander that prevented a bloody conflict. His troops, heated with action and flushed with success, were eager to storm the works; but he was unwilling to risk the loss of life that must attend an assault, when the object might be attained at a cheaper rate, by regular approaches. Checking the ardour of his men, therefore, though with some difficulty, he drew them off to a hollow way, in front of the lines, but out of the reach of the musketry, and encamped there for the night.[1]

The loss of the Americans in this disastrous battle has been variously stated, but is thought in killed, wounded, and prisoners, to have been nearly two thousand; a large number, considering that not above five thousand were engaged. The enemy acknowledged a loss of 380 killed and wounded.[2]

The success of the enemy was attributed, in some measure, to the doubt in which Washington was kept as to the nature of the intended attack, and at what point it would chiefly be made. This obliged him to keep a great part of

[1] General Howe to Lord G. Germaine. Remembrancer, iii. 347.

[2] Howe states the prisoners at 1,091, and computes the whole American loss at 3,300.

his forces in New York, and to distribute those at Brooklyn over a wide extent of country, and at widely-distant places. In fact, he knew not the superior number of the enemy encamped on Long Island, a majority of them having been furtively landed in the night, some days after the debarkation of the first division.

Much of the day's disaster has been attributed, also, to a confusion in the command, caused by the illness of General Greene. Putnam, who had supplied his place in the emergency after the enemy had landed, had not time to make himself acquainted with the post, and the surrounding country. Sullivan, though in his letters he professes to have considered himself subordinate to General Putnam within the lines, seems still to have exercised somewhat of an independent command, and to have acted at his own discretion: while Lord Stirling was said to have command of all the troops outside of the works.

The fatal error, however, and one probably arising from all these causes, consisted in leaving the passes through the wooded hills too weakly fortified and guarded; and especially in neglecting the eastern road, by which Sir Henry Clinton got in the rear of the advanced troops, cut them off from the lines, and subjected them to a cross fire of his own men and De Heister's Hessians.

This able and fatal scheme of the enemy might have been thwarted had the army been provided with a few troops of light-horse, to serve as videttes. With these to scour the roads and bring intelligence, the night march of Sir Henry Clinton, so decisive of the fortunes of the day, could hardly have failed to be discovered and reported. The Connecticut horsemen, therefore, ridiculed by the Southerners for their homely equipments, sneered at as useless, and dismissed for standing on their dignity and privileges as troopers, might, if retained, have saved the army from being surprised and severed, its advanced guards routed, and those very Southern troops cut up, captured, and almost annihilated.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

The Retreat from Long Island.

The night after the battle was a weary, yet almost sleepless one to the Americans. Fatigued, dispirited, many of them sick and wounded, yet they were, for the most part, without tent or other shelter. To Washington it was a night of anxious vigil. Everything boded a close and deadly conflict. The enemy had pitched a number of tents about a mile distant. Their sentries were but a quarter of a mile off, and close to the American sentries. At four o'clock in the morning, Washington went the round of the works, to see that all was right, and to speak words of encouragement. The morning broke lowering and dreary. Large encampments were gradually descried; to appearance, the enemy were twenty thousand strong. As the day advanced, their ordnance began to play upon the works. They were proceeding to intrench themselves, but were driven into their tents by a drenching rain.

Early in the morning General Mifflin arrived in camp, with part of the troops which had been stationed at Fort Washington and King's Bridge. He brought with him Shee's prime Philadelphia regiment, and Magaw's Pennsylvania regiment, both well-disciplined and officered, and accustomed to act together. They were so much reduced in number, however, by sickness, that they did not amount, in the whole, to more than eight hundred men. With Mifflin came also Colonel Glover's Massachusetts regiment, composed chiefly of Marblehead fishermen and sailors, hardy, adroit, and weather-proof; trimly clad in blue jackets and trousers. The detachment numbered, in the whole, about thirteen hundred men, all fresh and full of spirits. Every eye brightened as they marched briskly along the line with alert step and cheery aspect. They were posted at the left extremity of the intrenchments towards the Wallabout.

There were skirmishes throughout the day, between the riflemen on the advanced posts and the British "irregulars," which at times were quite severe; but no decided attack was attempted. The main body of the enemy kept

within their tents until the latter part of the day, when they began to break ground at about five hundred yards distance from the works, as if preparing to carry them by regular approaches.

On the 29th, there was a dense fog over the island, that wrapped everything in mystery. In the course of the morning, General Mifflin, with Adjutant-general Reed, and Colonel Grayson, of Virginia, one of Washington's aides-de-camp, rode to the western outposts, in the neighbourhood of Red Hook. While they were there, a light breeze lifted the fog from a part of the New York Bay, and revealed the British ships at their anchorage opposite Staten Island. There appeared to be an unusual bustle among them. Boats were passing to and from the admiral's ship, as if seeking or carrying orders. Some movement was apparently in agitation. The idea occurred to the reconnoitring party that the fleet was preparing, should the wind hold and the fog clear away, to come up the bay at the turn of the tide, silence the feeble batteries at Red Hook and the city, and anchor in the East River. In that case the army on Long Island would be completely surrounded and entrapped.

Alarmed at this perilous probability, they spurred back to head-quarters, to urge the immediate withdrawal of the army. As this might not be acceptable advice, Reed, emboldened by his intimacy with the commander-in-chief, undertook to give it. Washington instantly summoned a council of war. The difficulty was already apparent, of guarding such extensive works with troops fatigued and dispirited, and exposed to the inclemencies of the weather. Other dangers now presented themselves. Their communication with New York might be cut off by the fleet from below. Other ships had passed round Long Island, and were at Flushing Bay on the Sound. These might land troops on the east side of Harlem River, and make themselves masters of King's Bridge, that key of Manhattan Island. Taking all these things into consideration, it was resolved to cross with the troops to the city that very night.

Never did retreat require greater secrecy and circumspection. Nine thousand men, with all the munitions of

war, were to be withdrawn from before a victorious army, encamped so near, that every stroke of spade and pickaxe from their trenches could be heard. The retreating troops, moreover, were to be embarked and conveyed across a strait three-quarters of a mile wide, swept by rapid tides. The least alarm of their movement would bring the enemy upon them, and produce a terrible scene of confusion and carnage at the place of embarkation.

Washington made the preparatory arrangements with great alertness, yet profound secrecy. Verbal orders were sent to Colonel Hughes, who acted as quartermaster-general, to impress all water craft, large and small, from Spyt den Duivel on the Hudson round to Hell Gate on the Sound, and have them on the east side of the city by evening. The order was issued at noon, and so promptly executed, that, although some of the vessels had to be brought a distance of fifteen miles, they were all at Brooklyn at eight o'clock in the evening, and put under the management of Colonel Glover's amphibious Marblehead regiment.

To prepare the army for a general movement without betraying the object, orders were issued for the troops to hold themselves in readiness for a night attack upon the enemy. The orders caused surprise, for the poor fellows were exhausted, and their arms rendered nearly useless by the rain; all, however, prepared to obey; but several made nuncupative wills; as is customary among soldiers on the eve of sudden and deadly peril.

According to Washington's plan of retreat, to keep the enemy from discovering the withdrawal of the Americans until their main body should have embarked in the boats and pushed off from the shore, General Mifflin was to remain at the lines with his Pennsylvania troops, and the gallant remains of Haslet, Smallwood and Hand's regiments, with guards posted and sentinels alert, as if nothing extraordinary was taking place: when the main embarkation was effected, they were themselves to move off quietly, march briskly to the ferry, and embark. In case of any alarm that might disconcert the arrangements, Brooklyn church was to be the rallying-place, whither all should repair, so as unitedly to resist any attack.

It was late in the evening when the troops began to retire

from the breastworks. As one regiment quietly withdrew from their station on guard, the troops on the right and left moved up and filled the vacancy. There was a stifled murmur in the camp, unavoidable in a movement of the kind; but it gradually died away in the direction of the river, as the main body moved on in silence and order. The youthful Hamilton, whose military merits had won the favour of General Greene, and who had lost his baggage and a field-piece in the battle, brought up the rear of the retreating party. In the dead of the night, and in the midst of this hushed and anxious movement, a cannon went off with a tremendous roar. "The effect," says an American who was present, "was at once alarming and sublime. If the explosion was within our lines the gun was probably discharged in the act of spiking it, and could have been no less a matter of speculation to the enemy than to ourselves."[1]

"What with the greatness of the stake, the darkness of the night, the uncertainty of the design, and the extreme hazard of the issue," adds the same writer, "it would be difficult to conceive a more deeply-solemn and interesting scene."

The meaning of this midnight gun was never ascertained: fortunately, though it startled the Americans, it failed to rouse the British camp.

In the mean time the embarkation went on with all possible despatch, under the vigilant eye of Washington, who stationed himself at the ferry, superintending every movement. In his anxiety for despatch, he sent back Colonel Scammel, one of his aides-de-camp, to hasten forward all the troops that were on the march. Scammel blundered in executing his errand, and gave the order to Mifflin likewise. The general instantly called in his pickets and sentinels, and set off for the ferry.

By this time the tide had turned; there was a strong wind from the north-east; the boats with oars were insufficient to convey the troops; those with sails could not make headway against wind and tide. There was some confusion at the ferry, and in the midst of it, General Mifflin came

[1] Graydon's Memoirs, p. 167.

down with the whole covering party; adding to the embarrassment and uproar.

"Good God! General Mifflin!" cried Washington, "I am afraid you have ruined us by so unseasonably withdrawing the troops from the lines."

"I did so by your order," replied Mifflin, with some warmth. "It cannot be!" exclaimed Washington. "By G—, I did!" was the blunt rejoinder. "Did Scammel act as aide-de-camp for the day, or did he not?" "He did." "Then," said Mifflin, "I had orders through him." "It is a dreadful mistake," rejoined Washington, "and unless the troops can regain the lines before their absence is discovered by the enemy, the most disastrous consequences are to be apprehended."

Mifflin led back his men to the lines, which had been completely deserted for three-quarters of an hour. Fortunately, the dense fog had prevented the enemy from discovering that they were unoccupied. The men resumed their former posts, and remained at them until called off to cross the ferry. "Whoever has seen troops in a similar situation," writes General Heath, "or duly contemplates the human heart in such trials, will know how to appreciate the conduct of these brave men on this occasion."

The fog which prevailed all this time, seemed almost providential. While it hung over Long Island, and concealed the movements of the Americans, the atmosphere was clear on the New York side of the river. The adverse wind, too, died away, the river became so smooth that the row-boats could be laden almost to the gunwale; and a favouring breeze sprang up for the sail-boats. The whole embarkation of troops, artillery, ammunition, provisions, cattle, horses and carts, was happily effected, and by daybreak the greater part had safely reached the city, thanks to the aid of Glover's Marblehead men. Scarce anything was abandoned to the enemy, excepting a few heavy pieces of artillery. At a proper time, Mifflin with his covering party left the lines, and effected a silent retreat to the ferry. Washington, though repeatedly entreated, refused to enter a boat until all the troops were embarked; and crossed the river with the last.

A Long Island tradition tells how the British camp be-

came aware of the march which had been stolen upon it.[1] Near the ferry, resided a Mrs. Lapelye, whose husband, suspected of favouring the enemy, had been removed to the interior of New Jersey. On seeing the embarkation of the first detachment, she, out of loyalty or revenge, sent off a black servant to inform the first British officer he could find, of what was going on. The negro succeeded in passing the American sentinels, but arrived at a Hessian outpost, where he could not make himself understood, and was put under guard as a suspicious person. There he was kept until about daybreak, when an officer visiting the post, examined him, and was astounded by his story. An alarm was given, the troops were called to arms; Captain Montresor, aide-de-camp of General Howe, followed by a handful of men, climbed cautiously over the crest of the works and found them deserted. Advanced parties were hurried down to the ferry. The fog had cleared away, sufficiently for them to see the rear boats of the retreating army half way across the river. One boat, still within musket-shot, was compelled to return; it was manned by three vagabonds, who had lingered behind to plunder.

This extraordinary retreat, which, in its silence and celerity, equalled the midnight fortifying of Bunker's Hill, was one of the most signal achievements of the war, and redounded greatly to the reputation of Washington, who, we are told, for forty-eight hours preceding the safe extrication of his army from their perilous situation, scarce closed his eyes, and was the greater part of the time on horseback. Many, however, who considered the variety of risks and dangers which surrounded the camp, and the apparently fortuitous circumstances which averted them all, were disposed to attribute the safe retreat of the patriot army to a peculiar Providence.

[1] Hist. Long Island, p. 526.

CHAPTER LXXV.

Long Island in Possession of the Enemy—Distressed Situation of the American Army at New York—Question of abandoning the City—Letters from either Camp—Enemy's Ships in the Sound—Removal of Women and Children from the City—Yearning for Home among the Militia—Tolerant Ideas of Washington and Greene—Fort Constitution—Conference of Lord Howe with a Committee from Congress.

The enemy had now possession of Long Island. British and Hessian troops garrisoned the works at Brooklyn, or were distributed at Bushwick, Newtown, Hell Gate, and Flushing. Admiral Howe came up with the main body of the fleet, and anchored close to Governor's Island, within cannon-shot of the city.

"Our situation is truly distressing," writes Washington to the President of Congress, on the 2nd of September. "The check our detachment sustained on the 27th ultimo has dispirited too great a proportion of our troops, and filled their minds with apprehension and despair. The militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to a brave and manly opposition in order to repair our losses, are dismayed, intractable, and impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off; in some instances almost by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time. * * * With the deepest concern, I am obliged to confess my want of confidence in the generality of the troops. * * * Our number of men at present fit for duty is under twenty thousand. I have ordered General Mercer to send the men intended for the flying camp to this place, about a thousand in number, and to try with the militia, if practicable, to make a diversion upon Staten Island. Till of late, I had no doubt in my own mind of defending this place; nor should I have yet, if the men would do their duty, but this I despair of.

"If we should be obliged to abandon the town, ought it to stand as winter quarters for the enemy? They would derive great conveniences from it on the one hand, and much property would be destroyed on the other. It is an important question, but will admit of but little time for deliberation. At present, I dare say the enemy mean to

preserve it if they can. If Congress, therefore, should resolve upon the destruction of it, the resolution should be a profound secret, as the knowledge will make a capital change in their plans."

Colonel Reed, writing on the same day to his wife, says, "I have only time to say I am alive and well; as to spirits, but middling. * * * My country will, I trust, yet be free, whatever may be our fate who are cooped up, or are in danger of being so, on this tongue of land, where we ought never to have been."[1]

We turn to cite letters of the very same date from British officers on Long Island, full of rumours and surmises. "I have just heard," writes an English field officer, "there has been a most dreadful fray in the town of New York. The New Englanders insisted on setting the town on fire and retreating. This was opposed by the New Yorkers, who were joined by the Pennsylvanians, and a battle has been the consequence, in which many have lost their lives. By the steps our general is taking, I imagine he will effectually cut off their retreat at King's Bridge, by which the island of New York is joined to the continent."

An English officer of the guards, writing from camp on the same day, varies the rumour. The Pennsylvanians, according to his version, joined with the New Englanders in the project to set fire to the town; both had a battle with the New Yorkers on the subject, and then withdrew themselves from the city—which, "with other favourable circumstances," gave the latter writer a lively "hope that this distressful business would soon be brought to a happy issue."

Another letter gives a different version. "In the night of the 2nd instant, three persons escaped from the city in a canoe, and informed our general that Mr. Washington had ordered three battalions of New York Provincials to leave New York, and that they should be replaced by an equal number of Connecticut troops; but the former, assured that the Connecticutians would burn and destroy all the houses, peremptorily refused to give up their city, declaring that no cause of exigency whatever should in-

[1] Force's Am. Archives, 5th Series, ii. 123.

duce them to entrust the defence of it to any other than her own inhabitants. This spirited and stubborn resolution prevailed over the order of their commander, and the New Yorkers continue snugly in possession of the place."[1]

"Matters go on swimmingly," writes another officer, "I don't doubt the next news we send you, is that New York is ours, though in ashes, for the rebel troops have vowed to put it in flames if the Tory troops get over."

An American officer writes to an absent New Yorker, in a different tone. "I fear we shall evacuate your poor city. The very thought gives me the horrors!" Still he indulges a vague hope of succour from General Lee, who was returning, all-glorious, from his successes at the South. "General Lee," writes he, "is hourly expected, as if from heaven,—with a legion of flaming swordsmen." It was, however, what Lee himself would have termed a mere *brutum fulmen*.

These letters show the state of feeling in the opposite camps, at this watchful moment, when matters seemed hurrying to a crisis.

On the night of Monday (Sept. 2nd), a forty-gun ship, taking advantage of a favourable wind and tide, passed between Governor's Island and Long Island, swept unharmed by the batteries which opened upon her, and anchored in Turtle Bay, above the city. In the morning, Washington despatched Major Crane of the artillery, with two twelve-pounders and a howitzer, to annoy her from the New York shore. They hulled her several times, and obliged her to take shelter behind Blackwell's Island. Several other ships of war, with transports and store-ships, had made their appearance in the upper part of the Sound, having gone round Long Island.

As the city might speedily be attacked, Washington caused all the sick and wounded to be conveyed to Orangetown, in the Jersey, and such military stores and baggage as were not immediately needed, to be removed, as fast as conveyances could be procured, to a post partially fortified at Dobbs' Ferry, on the eastern bank of the Hudson, about twenty-two miles above the city.

[1] Force's Am. Archives, 5th Series, ii. 168.

Reed, in his letters to his wife, talks of the dark and mysterious motions of the enemy, and the equally dark and intricate councils of Congress, by which the army were disheartened and perplexed. "We are still here," writes he on the 6th, "in a posture somewhat awkward; we think (at least I do) that we cannot stay, and yet we do not know how to go, so that we may be properly said to be between hawk and buzzard."

The "shameful and scandalous desertions," as Washington termed them, continued. In a few days the Connecticut militia dwindled down from six to less than two thousand. "The impulse for going home was so irresistible," writes he, "that it answered no purpose to oppose it. Though I would not discharge them, I have been obliged to acquiesce."

Still his considerate mind was tolerant of their defection. "Men," said he, "accustomed to unbounded freedom, cannot brook the restraint which is indispensably necessary to the good order and government of an army." And again, "Men just dragged from the tender scenes of domestic life, unaccustomed to the din of arms, totally unacquainted with every kind of military skill (which is followed by a want of confidence in themselves, when opposed to troops regularly trained, superior in knowledge, and superior in arms), are timid and ready to fly from their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their manner of living, brings on an unconquerable desire to return to their homes."

Greene, also, who coincided so much with Washington in opinions and sentiments, observes: "People coming from home with all the tender feelings of domestic life, are not sufficiently fortified with natural courage to stand the shocking scenes of war. To march over dead men, to hear without concern the groans of the wounded—I say few men can stand such scenes unless steeled by habit or fortified by military pride."

Nor was this ill-timed yearning for home confined to the yeomanry of Connecticut, who might well look to their humble farms, where they had left the plough standing in the furrow, and where everything might go to ruin, and their family to want, in their absence. Some of the gen-

tlemen volunteers from beyond the Delaware, who had made themselves merry at the expense of the rustic soldiery of New England, were likewise among the first to feel the homeward impulse. "When I look around," said Reed, the adjutant-general, "and see how few of the numbers who talked so loudly of death and honour are around me, I am lost in wonder and surprise. Some of our Philadelphia gentlemen who came over on visits, upon the first cannon, went off in a most violent hurry. Your noisy sons of liberty, are, I find, the quietest on the field."[1]

Present experience induced Washington to reiterate the opinion he had repeatedly expressed to Congress, that little reliance was to be placed on militia enlisted for short periods. The only means of protecting the national liberties from great hazard, if not utter loss, was, he said, an army enlisted for the war.

The thousand men ordered from the flying camp were furnished by General Mercer. They were Maryland troops, under Colonels Griffith and Richardson, and were a seasonable addition to his effective forces; but the ammunition carried off by the disbanding militia, was a serious loss at this critical juncture.

A work had been commenced on the Jersey shore, opposite Fort Washington, to aid in protecting Putnam's chevaux-de-frise which had been sunk between them. This work had received the name of Fort Constitution (a name already borne by one of the forts in the Highlands). Troops were drawn from the flying camp to make a strong encampment in the vicinity of the fort, with an able officer to command it and a skilful engineer to strengthen the works. It was hoped, by the co-operation of these opposite forts and the chevaux-de-frise, to command the Hudson, and prevent the passing and repassing of hostile ships.

The British, in the mean time, forbore to press further hostilities. Lord Howe was really desirous of a peaceful adjustment of the strife between the colonies and the mother-country, and supposed this a propitious moment for a new attempt at pacification. He accordingly sent off General Sullivan on parole, charged with an overture

[1] Life of Reed, i. 231.

to Congress. In this he declared himself empowered and disposed to compromise the dispute between Great Britain and America, on the most favourable terms, and, though he could not treat with Congress as a legally-organized body, he was desirous of a conference with some of its members. These, for the time, he should consider only as private gentlemen; but if in the conference any probable scheme of accommodation should be agreed upon, the authority of Congress would afterwards be acknowledged, to render the compact complete.[1]

The message caused some embarrassment in Congress. To accede to the interview might seem to waive the question of independence; to decline it was to shut the door on all hope of conciliation, and might alienate the co-operation of some worthy Whigs who still clung to that hope. After much debate, Congress, on the 5th September, replied, that being the representatives of the free and independent States of America, they could not send any members to confer with his lordship in their private characters, but that, ever desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they would send a committee of their body to ascertain what authority he had to treat with persons authorized by Congress, and what propositions he had to offer.

A committee was chosen on the 6th of September, composed of John Adams, Edward Rutledge, and Doctor Franklin. The latter, in the preceding year, during his residence in England, had become acquainted with Lord Howe, at the house of his lordship's sister, the Honourable Mrs. Howe, and they had held frequent conversations on the subject of American affairs, in the course of which his lordship had intimated the possibility of his being sent commissioner to settle the differences in America.

Franklin had recently adverted to this in a letter to Lord Howe. "Your lordship may possibly remember the tears of joy that wet my cheek, when, at your good sister's in London, you once gave me expectations that a reconciliation might soon take place. I had the misfortune to find those expectations disappointed. * * *

"The well-founded esteem and, permit me to say, affec-

[1] Civil War, vol. i. p. 190.

tion which I shall always have for your lordship, makes it painful for me to see you engaged in conducting a war, the great ground of which, as expressed in your letter, is 'the necessity of preventing the American trade from passing into foreign channels.' * * * I know your great motive in coming hither was the hope of being instrumental in a reconciliation; and I believe that when you find *that* impossible on any terms given to you to propose, you will relinquish so odious a command, and return to a more honourable private station."

"I can have no difficulty to acknowledge," replied Lord Howe, "that the powers I am invested with were never calculated to negotiate a reunion with America, under any other description than as subject to the crown of Great Britain. But I do esteem those powers competent, not only to confer and negotiate with any gentlemen of influence in the colonies upon the terms, but also to effect a lasting peace and reunion between the two countries, were the tempers of the colonies such as professed in the last petition of Congress to the king."[1]

A hope of the kind lingered in the breast of his lordship when he sought the proposed conference. It was to take place on the 11th, at a house on Staten Island, opposite to Amboy; at which latter place the veteran Mercer was stationed with his flying camp. At Amboy, the committee found Lord Howe's barge waiting to receive them, with a British officer of rank, who was to remain within the American lines during their absence, as a hostage. This guarantee of safety was promptly declined, and the parties crossed together to Staten Island. The admiral met them on their landing, and conducted them through his guards to his house.

On opening the conference, his lordship again intimated that he could not treat with them as a committee of Congress, but only confer with them as private gentlemen of influence in the colonies on the means of restoring peace between the two countries.

The commissioners replied that, as their business was to hear, he might consider them in what light he pleased;

[1] Franklin's Writings, v. 103.

but that they should consider themselves in no other character than that in which they were placed by order of Congress.

Lord Howe then entered into a discourse of considerable length, but made no explicit proposition of peace, nor promise of redress of grievances, excepting on condition that the colonies should return to their allegiance.

This, the commissioners replied, was not now to be expected. Their repeated humble petitions to the king and parliament having been treated with contempt, and answered by additional injuries, and war having been declared against them, the colonies had declared their independence, and it was not in the power of Congress to agree for them that they should return to their former dependent state.[1]

His lordship expressed his sorrow that no accommodation was likely to take place; and, on breaking up the conference, assured his old friend, Dr. Franklin, that he should suffer great pain in being obliged to distress those for whom he had so much regard.

"I feel thankful to your lordship for your regard," replied Franklin good-humouredly; "the Americans, on their part, will endeavour to lessen the pain you may feel, by taking good care of themselves."

The result of this conference had a beneficial effect. It showed that his lordship had no power but what was given by the act of Parliament; and put an end to the popular notion that he was vested with secret powers to negotiate an adjustment of grievances.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

Movements of the Enemy—Councils of War—Question of the abandonment of the City—Distribution of the Army—Ships in the East River—The Enemy at Hell Gate—Skirmish at Turtle Bay—Panic of the Connecticut Militia—Rage and Personal Peril of Washington—Putnam's perilous Retreat from the City—British Regale at Murray Hill.

Since the retreat from Brooklyn, Washington had narrowly watched the movements of the enemy to discover their

[1] Report of the Comm. to Cong., Sept. 13, 1776.

further plans. Their whole force, excepting about four thousand men, had been transferred from Staten to Long Island. A great part was encamped on the peninsula between Newtown Inlet and Flushing Bay. A battery had been thrown up near the extremity of the peninsula, to check an American battery at Horen's Hook opposite, and to command the mouth of Harlem River. Troops were subsequently stationed on the islands about Hell Gate. "It is evident," writes Washington, "the enemy mean to inclose us on the island of New York, by taking post in our rear, while the shipping secures the front, and thus, by cutting off our communication with the country, oblige us to fight them on their own terms, or surrender at discretion; or by a brilliant stroke endeavour to cut this army in pieces, and secure the collection of arms and stores, which they well know we shall not be able soon to replace."[1]

The question was, how could their plans be most successfully opposed? On every side he saw a choice of difficulties; every measure was to be formed with some apprehension that all the troops would not do their duty. History, experience, the opinions of able friends in Europe, the fears of the enemy, even the declarations of Congress, all concurred in demonstrating that the war on the American side should be defensive; a war of posts; that, on all occasions, a general action should be avoided, and nothing put at risk unnecessarily. "With these views," said Washington, "and being fully persuaded that it would be presumption to draw out our young troops into open ground against their superiors, both in number and discipline, I have never spared the spade and pickaxe."

In a council of war, held on the 7th of September, the question was discussed, whether the city should be defended or evacuated. All admitted that it would not be tenable, should it be cannonaded and bombarded. Several of the council, among whom was General Putnam, were for a total and immediate removal from the city; urging that one part of the army might be cut off before the other

[1] Letter to the President of Congress.

could support it, the extremities being at least sixteen miles apart, and the whole, when collected, being inferior to the enemy. By removing, they would deprive the enemy of the advantage of their ships; they would keep them at bay; put nothing at hazard; keep the army together to be recruited another year, and preserve the unspent stores and the heavy artillery. Washington himself inclined to this opinion. Others, however, were unwilling to abandon a place which had been fortified with great cost and labour, and seemed defensible; and which, by some, had been considered the key to the northern country; it might dispirit the troops, and enfeeble the cause. General Mercer, who was prevented by illness from attending the council, communicated his opinion by letter. "We should keep New York if possible," said he, "as the acquiring of it will give éclat to the arms of Great Britain, afford the soldiers good quarters, and furnish a safe harbour for the fleet."

General Greene, also, being still unwell, conveyed his opinion in a letter to Washington, dated September 5th. He advised that the army should abandon both city and island, and post itself at King's Bridge and along the Westchester shore. That there was no object to be obtained by holding any position below King's Bridge. The enemy might throw troops on Manhattan Island, from their camps on Long Island, and their ships on the Hudson, and form an intrenched line across it, between the city and the middle division of the army, and support the two flanks of the line by their shipping. In such case it would be necessary to fight them on disadvantageous terms or submit.

The city and island, he observed, were objects not to be put in competition with the general interests of America. Two-thirds of the city and suburbs belonged to Tories; there was no great reason, therefore, to run any considerable risk in its defence. The honour and interest of America required a general and speedy retreat. But as the enemy, once in possession, could never be dislodged without a superior naval force; as the place would furnish them with excellent winter quarters and barrack room, and an abundant market, he ad-

vised to burn both city and suburbs before retreating.[1]

Well might the poor, harassed citizens feel hysterical, threatened as they were by sea and land, and their very defenders debating the policy of burning their houses over their heads. Fortunately for them, Congress had expressly forbidden that any harm should be done to New York, trusting that, though the enemy might occupy it for a time, it would ultimately be regained.

After much discussion a middle course was adopted. Putnam, with five thousand men, was to be stationed in the city. Heath, with nine thousand, was to keep guard on the upper part of the island, and oppose any attempt of the enemy to land. His troops, among whom were Magaw's, Shee's, Hand's, and Miles's Pennsylvanian battalions, and Haslet's Delaware regiment, were posted about King's Bridge and its vicinity.

The third division, composed principally of militia, was under the command of Generals Greene and Spencer, the former of whom, however, was still unwell. It was stationed about the centre of the island, chiefly along Turtle Bay and Kip's Bay, where strong works had been thrown up, to guard against any landing of troops from the ships or from the encampments on Long Island. It was also to hold itself ready to support either of the other divisions. Washington himself had his head-quarters at a short distance from the city. A resolution of Congress, passed the 10th of September, left the occupation or abandonment of the city entirely at Washington's discretion. Nearly the whole of his officers, too, in a second council of war, retracted their former opinion, and determined that the removal of his army was not only prudent, but absolutely necessary. Three members of the council, however, Generals Spencer, Heath, and George Clinton, tenaciously held to the former decision.

Convinced of the propriety of evacuation, Washington prepared for it by ordering the removal of all stores, excepting such as were indispensable for the subsistence of the troops while they remained. A letter from a Rhode

[1] Force's Am. Archives, 5th Series, ii. 182.

Island officer, on a visit to New York, gives an idea of its agitations. "On the 13th of September, just after dinner, three frigates and a forty-gun ship sailed up the East River with a gentle breeze, toward Hell Gate, and kept up an incessant fire, assisted by the cannon at Governor's Island. The batteries of the city returned the ships the like salutation. Three men agape, idle spectators, had the misfortune of being killed by one cannon-ball. One shot struck within six feet of General Washington, as he was on horseback, riding into the fort."[1]

On the 14th, Washington's baggage was removed to King's Bridge, where head-quarters were to be transferred the same evening; it being clear that the enemy were preparing to encompass him on the island. "It is now a trial of skill whether they will or not," writes Colonel Reed, "and every night we lie down with the most anxious fears for the fate of to-morrow."[2]

About sunset of the same day, six more ships, two of them men-of-war, passed up the Sound and joined those above. Within half an hour came expresses spurring to head-quarters, one from Mifflin, at King's Bridge, the other from Colonel Sargent, at Horen's Hook. Three or four thousand of the enemy were crossing at Hell Gate to the islands at the mouth of Harlem River, where numbers were already encamped. An immediate landing at Harlem or Morrisania was apprehended. Washington was instantly in the saddle, spurring to Harlem Heights. The night, however, passed away quietly. In the morning the enemy commenced operations. Three ships of war stood up the Hudson, "causing a most tremendous firing, assisted by the cannons of Governor's Island, which firing was returned from the city as well as the scarcity of heavy cannon would allow."[3] The ships anchored opposite Bloomingdale, a few miles above the city, and put a stop to the removal by water of stores and provisions to Dobbs' Ferry. About eleven o'clock, the ships in the East River commenced a heavy cannonade upon the breastworks between Turtle Bay and the city. At the same time two divisions of the troops

[1] Col. Babcock to Gov. Cooke. Am. Archives, 5th Series, ii. 443.
[2] Reed to Mrs. Reed.
[3] Letter of Colonel Babcock to Gov. Cooke.

encamped on Long Island, one British, under Sir Henry Clinton, the other Hessian, under Colonel Donop, emerged in boats from the deep, woody recesses of Newtown Inlet, and under cover of the fire from the ships, began to land at two points between Turtle and Kip's Bays. The breast-works were manned by militia who had recently served at Brooklyn. Disheartened by their late defeat, they fled at the first advance of the enemy. Two brigades of Putnam's Connecticut troops (Parsons' and Fellows'), which had been sent that morning to support them, caught the panic, and regardless of the commands and entreaties of their officers, joined in the general scamper.

At this moment Washington, who had mounted his horse at the first sound of the cannonade, came galloping to the scene of confusion: riding in among the fugitives, he endeavoured to rally and restore them to order. All in vain. At the first appearance of sixty or seventy red coats, they broke again without firing a shot, and fled in headlong terror. Losing all self-command at the sight of such dastardly conduct, he dashed his hat upon the ground in a transport of rage. "Are these the men," exclaimed he, "with whom I am to defend America!" In a paroxysm of passion and despair he snapped his pistols at some of them, threatened others with his sword, and was so heedless of his own danger, that he might have fallen into the hands of the enemy, who were not eighty yards distant, had not an aide-de-camp seized the bridle of his horse, and absolutely hurried him away.[1]

It was one of the rare moments of his life, when the vehement element of his nature was stirred up from its deep recesses. He soon recovered his self-possession, and took measures against the general peril. The enemy might land another force about Hell Gate, seize upon Harlem Heights, the strong central position of the island, cut off all

[1] Graydon's Memoirs, p. 174. General Greene, in a letter to a friend, writes: "We made a miserable disorderly retreat from New York, owing to the conduct of the militia, who ran at the appearance of the enemy's advanced guard. Fellows' and Parsons' brigades ran away from about fifty men, and left his Excellency on the ground, within eighty yards of the enemy, so vexed at the infamous conduct of his troops, that he sought death rather than life."

retreat of the lower divisions, and effectually sever his army. In all haste, therefore, he sent off an express to the forces encamped above, directing them to secure that position immediately; while another express to Putnam ordered an immediate retreat from the city to those heights.

It was indeed a perilous moment. Had the enemy followed up their advantage, and seized upon the heights before thus occupied; or had they extended themselves across the island, from the place where they had effected a landing, the result might have been most disastrous to the Americans. Fortunately, they contented themselves for the present with sending a strong detachment down the road along the East River, leading to the city, while the main body, British and Hessians, rested on their arms.

In the meantime, Putnam, on receiving Washington's express, called in his pickets and guards, and abandoned the city in all haste, leaving behind him a large quantity of provisions and military stores, and most of the heavy cannon. To avoid the enemy he took the Bloomingdale road, though this exposed him to be raked by the enemy's ships anchored in the Hudson. It was a forced march, on a sultry day, under a burning sun, and amid clouds of dust. His army was encumbered with women and children and all kinds of baggage. Many were overcome by fatigue and thirst, some perished by hastily drinking cold water; but Putnam rode backward and forward, hurrying every one on.

Colonel Humphreys, at that time a volunteer in his division, writes: "I had frequent opportunities that day of beholding him, for the purpose of issuing orders and encouraging the troops, flying on his horse covered with foam, wherever his presence was most necessary. Without his extraordinary exertions, the guards must have been inevitably lost, and it is probable the entire corps would have been cut in pieces.

"When we were not far from Bloomingdale, an aide-de-camp came to him at full speed, to inform him that a column of British infantry was descending upon our right. Our rear was soon fired upon, and the colonel of our regiment, whose order was just communicated for the front to

file off to the left, was killed upon the spot. With no other loss, we joined the army after dark upon the heights of Harlem." [1]

Tradition gives a circumstance which favoured Putnam's retreat. The British generals, in passing by Murray Hill, the country residence of a patriot of that name, who was of the Society of Friends, made a halt to seek some refreshment. The proprietor of the house was absent; but his wife set cake and wine before them in abundance. So grateful were these refreshments in the heat of the day, that they lingered over their wine, quaffing, and laughing, and bantering their patriotic hostess about the ludicrous panic and discomfiture of her countrymen. In the mean time, before they were roused from their regale, Putnam and his forces had nearly passed by within a mile of them. All the loss sustained by him in his perilous retreat was fifteen killed and about three hundred taken prisoners. It became, adds the tradition, a common saying among the American officers, that Mrs. Murray saved Putnam's division of the army.[2]

CHAPTER LXXVII.

Fortified Camp at King's Bridge—American and British Lines—The Morris House—Alexander Hamilton—The Enemy advance—Successful Skirmish—Death of Knowlton—Great Fire in New York—Reorganization of the Army—Exchange of Prisoners—Daniel Morgan regained—De Lancey's Tory Brigade—Robert Rogers, the Partisan—His Rangers—The Roebuck, Phœnix, and Tartar, in the Hudson—Military Movements by Land and Water—Letter of John Jay.

The fortified camp, where the main body of the army was now assembled, was upon that neck of land several miles long, and for the most part not above a mile wide, which forms the upper part of Manhattan or New York Island. It forms a chain of rocky heights, and is separated from the mainland by Harlem River, a narrow strait, extending from Hell Gate on the Sound to Spyt den Duivel, a creek or inlet of the Hudson. Fort Washington occupied the crest of one of the rocky heights above mentioned, over-

[1] Peabody, Life of Putnam. Sparks' Am. Biog., vii. 189.
[2] Thacher's Military Journal, p. 70.

looking the Hudson; and about two miles north of it was King's Bridge, crossing Spyt den Duivel Creek, and forming at that time the only pass from Manhattan Island to the mainland.

About a mile and a half south of the fort a double row of lines extended across the neck from Harlem River to the Hudson. They faced south towards New York, were about a quarter of a mile apart, and were defended by batteries.

There were strong advanced posts about two miles south of the outer line; one on the left at Harlem, commanded by General Spencer; the other on the right, at what was called McGowan's Pass, commanded by General Putnam. About a mile and half beyond these posts the British lines extended across the island from Horen's Hook to the Hudson, being a continuous encampment, two miles in length, with both flanks covered by shipping. An open plain intervened between the hostile camps.

Washington had established his head-quarters about a quarter of a mile within the inner line, at a country seat, the owners of which were absent. It belonged, in fact, to Colonel Roger Morris, his early companion in arms in Braddock's campaign, and his successful competitor for the hand of Miss Mary Philipse. Morris had remained in America, enjoying the wealth he had acquired by his marriage, but had adhered to the royal party, and was a member of the council of the colony. It is said that at this time he was residing in the Highlands at Beverley, the seat of his brother-in-law, Washington's old friend, Beverley Robinson.[1]

While thus posted, Washington was incessantly occupied in fortifying the approaches to his camp by redoubts, *abatis*, and deep intrenchments. "Here," said he, "I should hope the enemy, in case of attack, would meet a defeat, if the generality of our troops would behave with tolerable bravery; but experience, to my extreme affliction, has convinced me that it is rather to be wished than expected. However, I trust there are many who will act

[1] The portrait of Miss Mary Philipse is still to be seen in the possession of Frederick Phillips, Esq., at the Grange, on the Highlands opposite West Point.

like men worthy of the blessings of freedom." The late disgraceful scene at Kip's Bay was evidently rankling in his mind.

In the course of his rounds of inspection, he was struck with the skill and science displayed in the construction of some of the works, which were thrown up under the direction of a youthful captain of artillery. It proved to be the same young officer, Alexander Hamilton, whom Greene had recommended to his notice. After some conversation with him, Washington invited him to his marquee, and thus commenced that intercourse which has indissolubly linked their memories together.

On the morning of the 16th, word was brought to headquarters that the enemy were advancing in three large columns. There had been so many false reports, that Reed, the adjutant-general, obtained leave to sally out and ascertain the truth. Washington himself soon mounted his horse, and rode toward the advanced posts. On arriving there he heard a brisk firing. It was kept up for a time with great spirit. There was evidently a sharp conflict. At length Reed came galloping back with information. A strong detachment of the enemy had attacked the most advanced post, which was situated on a hill skirted by a wood. It had been bravely defended by Lieutenant-colonel Knowlton, Putnam's favourite officer, who had distinguished himself at Bunker's Hill: he had under him a party of Connecticut rangers, volunteers from different regiments. After skirmishing for a time, the party had been overpowered by numbers and driven in, and the outpost was taken possession of by the enemy. Reed supposed the latter to be about three hundred strong; but they were much stronger, the main part having been concealed behind a rising ground in the wood. They were composed of a battalion of light infantry, another of Royal Highlanders, and three companies of Hessian riflemen; all under the command of General Leslie.

Reed urged that troops should be sent to support the brave fellows who had behaved so well. While he was talking with Washington, "the enemy," he says, "appeared in open view, and sounded their bugles in the most insulting manner, as usual after a fox-chase. I never," adds

he, "felt such a sensation before; it seemed to crown our disgrace."

Washington, too, was stung by the taunting note of derision; it recalled the easy triumph of the enemy at Kip's Bay. Resolved that something should be done to wipe out that disgrace, and rouse the spirits of the army, he ordered out three companies from Colonel Weedon's regiment just arrived from Virginia, and sent them, under Major Leitch, to join Knowlton's rangers. The troops thus united were to get in the rear of the enemy, while a feigned attack was made upon them in front.

The plan was partially successful. As the force advanced to make the false attack, the enemy ran down the hill, and took what they considered an advantageous position behind some fences and bushes which skirted it. A firing commenced between them and the advancing party, but at too great distance to do much harm on either side. In the meantime, Knowlton and Leitch, ignorant of this change in the enemy's position, having made a circuit, came upon them in flank instead of in rear. They were sharply received. A vivid contest took place, in which Connecticut vied with Virginia in bravery. In a little while Major Leitch received three bullets in his side, and was borne off the field. Shortly afterward, a wound in the head from a musket-ball brought Knowlton to the ground. Colonel Reed placed him on his horse, and conveyed him to a distant redoubt. The men, undismayed by the fall of their leaders, fought with unflinching resolution under the command of their captains. The enemy were reinforced by a battalion of Hessians and a company of chasseurs. Washington likewise sent reinforcements of New England and Maryland troops. The action waxed hotter and hotter; the enemy were driven from the wood into the plain, and pushed for some distance; the Americans were pursuing them with ardour, when Washington, having effected the object of this casual encounter, and being unwilling to risk a general action, ordered a retreat to be sounded.

It was with difficulty, however, his men could be called off, so excited were they by the novelty of pursuing an enemy. They retired in good order; and, as it subsequently appeared, in good season, for the main body of the enemy

were advancing at a rapid rate, and might have effectually reversed the scene.

Colonel Knowlton did not long survive the action. "When gasping in the agonies of death," says Colonel Reed, "all his inquiry was whether we had driven in the enemy." He was anxious for the tarnished honour of Connecticut. He had the dying satisfaction of knowing that his men had behaved bravely, and beaten the enemy in an open field-fight. So closed his gallant career.

The encounter thus detailed was a small affair in itself, but important in its effects. It was the first gleam of success in the campaign, and revived the spirits of the army. Washington sought to turn it to the greatest advantage. In his general orders, he skilfully distributed praise and censure. The troops under Leitch were thanked for being the first to advance upon the enemy; and the New England troops for gallantly supporting them, and their conduct was honourably contrasted with that of the recreant troops at Kip's Bay. Of Knowlton, who had fallen while gloriously fighting, he spoke as "one who would have done honour to any country."

The name of Leitch was given by him for the next day's parole. That brave officer died of his wounds on the 1st of October, soothed in his last moments by that recompense so dear to a soldier's heart, the encomium of a beloved commander.

In the dead of the night, on the 20th September, a great light was beheld by the picket guards, looming up from behind the hills in the direction of the city. It continued throughout the night, and was at times so strong, that the heavens in that direction appeared to them, they said, as if in flames. At daybreak, huge columns of smoke were still rising. It was evident there had been a great conflagration in New York.

In the course of the morning, Captain Montresor, aide-de-camp to General Howe, came out with a flag, bearing a letter to Washington on the subject of an exchange of prisoners. According to Montresor's account, a great part of the city had been burnt down, and as the night was extremely windy, the whole might have been so, but for the exertions of the officers and men of the British army. He

implied it to be the act of American incendiaries, several of whom, he informed Colonel Reed, had been caught in the fact and instantly shot. General Howe, in his private correspondence, makes the same assertion, and says they were detected, and killed on the spot by the enraged troops in garrison.

Enraged troops, with weapons in their hands, are not apt, in a time of confusion and alarm, to be correct judges of fact, or dispensers of justice. The act was always disclaimed by the Americans, and it is certain their commanders knew nothing about it. We have shown that the destruction of the city was at one time discussed in a council of war as a measure of policy, but never adopted, and was expressly forbidden by Congress.

The enemy were now bringing up their heavy cannon, preparatory to an attack upon the American camp by the troops and by their ships. What was the state of Washington's army? The terms of engagement of many of his men would soon be at an end, most of them would terminate with the year, nor did Congress hold out offers to encourage re-enlistments. "We are now, as it were, upon the eve of another dissolution of the army," writes he, "and unless some speedy and effectual measures are adopted by Congress, our cause will be lost." Under these gloomy apprehensions, he borrowed, as he said, "a few moments from the hours allotted to sleep," and on the night of the 24th of September, penned an admirable letter to the President of Congress, setting forth the total inefficiency of the existing military system, the total insubordination, waste, confusion, and discontent produced by it among the men, and the harassing cares and vexations to which it subjected the commanders. Nor did he content himself with complaining; but, in his full, clear, and sagacious manner, pointed out the remedies. To the achievements of his indefatigable pen, we may trace the most fortunate turns in the current of our revolutionary affairs. In the present instance his representations, illustrated by sad experience, produced at length a reorganization of the army, and the establishment of it on a permanent footing. It was decreed that eighty-eight battalions should be furnished in quotas, by the different States, according to their abilities. The pay of the

officers was raised. The troops which engaged to serve throughout the war were to receive a bounty of twenty dollars and one hundred acres of land, besides a yearly suit of clothes while in service. Those who enlisted for but three years, received no bounty in land. The bounty to officers was on a higher ratio. The States were to send commissioners to the army, to arrange with the commander-in-chief as to the appointment of officers in their quotas; but, as they might occasionally be slow in complying with this regulation, Washington was empowered to fill up all vacancies.

All this was a great relief to his mind. He was gratified, also, by effecting, after a long correspondence with the British commander, an exchange of prisoners, in which those captured in Canada were included. Among those restored to the service were Lord Stirling and Captain Daniel Morgan. The latter, in reward of his good conduct in the expedition with Arnold, and of "his intrepid behaviour in the assault upon Quebec where the brave Montgomery fell," was recommended to Congress by Washington for the command of a rifle regiment about to be raised. We shall see how eminently he proved himself worthy of this recommendation.

About this time information was received that the enemy were enlisting great numbers of the loyalists of Long Island, and collecting large quantities of stock for their support. Oliver De Lancey, a leading loyalist of New York, member of a wealthy family of honourable Huguenot descent, was a prime agent in the matter. He had recently been appointed brigadier-general in the royal service, and authorized by General Howe to raise a brigade of provincials; and was actually at Jamaica, on Long Island, offering commissions of captain, lieutenant, and ensign, to any respectable person who should raise a company of seventy men; the latter to receive British pay.

A descent upon Long Island, to counteract these projects, was concerted by General George Clinton of New York, and General Lincoln of Massachusetts, but men and water craft were wanting to carry it into effect, and the "Tory enlistments continued." They were not confined to Long Island, but prevailed more or less on Staten

Island, in the Jerseys, up the Hudson as far as Dutchess County, and in Westchester County more especially. Many of the loyalists, it must be acknowledged, were honourable men, conscientiously engaged in the service of their sovereign, and anxious to put down what they sincerely regarded as an unjustifiable rebellion, and among these may be clearly classed the De Lanceys. There were others, however, of a different stamp, the most notorious of whom, at this juncture, was one Robert Rogers, of New Hampshire. He had been a worthy comrade of Putnam and Stark, in some of their early enterprises during the French war, and had made himself famous as major of a partisan corps called Rogers' Rangers. Governor Trumbull described him as a "famous scouter and wood-hunter, skilled in waylaying, ambuscade, and sudden attack." His feats of arms had evidently somewhat of the Indian character. He had since been Governor of Michilimackinac (1766), and accused of a plot to plunder his own fort and join the French. At the outbreak of the Revolution he played a skulking, equivocal part, and appeared ready to join either party. In 1775, Washington had received notice that he was in Canada, in the service of Carleton, and had been as a spy, disguised as an Indian, through the American camp at St. Johns.

Recently, on learning that he was prowling about the country under suspicious circumstances, Washington had caused him to be arrested. On examination, he declared that he was on his way to offer his secret services to Congress. He was accordingly sent on to that body, in custody of an officer. Congress liberated him on his pledging himself in writing, "on the honour of a gentleman," not to bear arms against the American United Colonies in any manner whatever during the contest with Great Britain.

Scarcely was he liberated when he forfeited his parole, offered his services to the enemy, received a colonel's commission, and was now actually raising a Tory corps to be called the Queen's Rangers. All such as should bring recruits to his standard were promised commissions, portions of rebel lands, and privileges equal to any of his majesty's troops.

Of all Americans of note enlisted under the royal standard, this man had rendered himself the most odious. He was stigmatized as an arrant renegade, a perfect Judas Iscariot; and his daring, adventurous spirit, and habits of Indian warfare, rendered him a formidable enemy.

Nothing perplexed Washington at this juncture more than the conduct of the enemy. He beheld before him a hostile army, armed and equipped at all points, superior in numbers, thoroughly disciplined, flushed with success, and abounding in the means of pushing a vigorous campaign, yet suffering day after day to elapse unimproved. What could be the reason of this supineness on the part of Sir William Howe? He must know the depressed and disorganized state of the American camp; the absolute chaos that reigned there. Did he meditate an irruption into the Jerseys? A movement towards Philadelphia? Did he intend to detach a part of his forces for a winter's campaign against the South?

In this uncertainty, Washington wrote to General Mercer, of the flying camp, to keep a vigilant watch from the Jersey shore on the movements of the enemy by sea and land, and to station videttes on the Neversink Heights, to give immediate intelligence should any of the British fleet put to sea. At the same time he himself practised unceasing vigilance, visiting the different parts of his camp on horseback. Occasionally he crossed over to Fort Constitution, on the Jersey shore, of which General Greene had charge, and, accompanied by him, extended his reconnoitrings down to Paulus Hook, to observe what was going on in the city and among the enemy's ships. Greene had recently been promoted to the rank of major-general, and now had command of all the troops in the Jerseys. He had liberty to shift his quarters to Baskingridge or Bergen, as circumstances might require; but was enjoined to keep up a communication with the main army, east of the Hudson, so as to secure a retreat in case of necessity.

The security of the Hudson was at this time an object of great solicitude with Congress, and much reliance was placed on Putnam's obstructions at Fort Washington. Four galleys, mounted with heavy guns and swivels, were stationed at the chevaux-de-frise, and two new ships were

at hand, which, filled with stones, were to be sunk where they would block up the channel. A sloop was also at anchor, having on board a machine, invented by a Mr. Bushnell, for submarine explosion, with which to blow up the men-of-war, a favourite scheme with General Putnam. The obstructions were so commanded by batteries on either shore, that it was thought no hostile ship would be able to pass.

On the 9th of October, however, the 'Roebuck' and 'Phœnix,' each of forty-four guns, and the 'Tartar' of twenty guns, which had been lying for some time opposite Bloomingdale, got under way with their three tenders, at eight o'clock in the morning, and came standing up the river with an easy southern breeze. At their approach, the galleys and the two ships intended to be sunk, got under way with all haste, as did a schooner laden with rum, sugar, and other supplies for the American army, and the sloop with Bushnell's submarine machine.

The 'Roebuck,' 'Phœnix,' and 'Tartar,' broke through the vaunted barriers as through a cobweb. Seven batteries kept up a constant fire upon them, yet a gentleman was observed walking the deck of the second ship as coolly as if nothing were the matter.[1] Washington, indeed, in a letter to Schuyler, says, "they passed without any kind of damage or interruption;" but Lord Howe reports to the Admiralty that they suffered much in their masts and rigging, and that a lieutenant, two midshipmen, and six men were killed, and eighteen wounded.

The hostile ships kept on their course, the American vessels scudding before them. The schooner was overhauled and captured; a well-aimed shot sent the sloop and Bushnell's submarine engine to the bottom of the river. The two new ships would have taken refuge in Spyt den Duivel Creek, but fearing there might not be water enough, they kept on and drove ashore at Philipps' Mills at Yonkers. Two of the galleys got into a place of safety, where they were protected from the shore; the other two trusted to outsail their pursuers. The breeze freshened, and the frigates gained on them fast; at eleven o'clock began to

[1] Col. Ewing to the Maryland Comm. of Safety.

fire on them with their bow-chasers; at twelve o'clock overreached them, which caused them to bear in shore; at half-past one the galleys run aground just above Dobbs' Ferry, and lay exposed to a shower of grape-shot. The crews, without stopping to burn or bilge them, swam on shore, and the enemy took possession of the two galleys, which were likely to be formidable means of annoyance in their hands.

One express after another brought Washington word of these occurrences. First, he sent off a party of rifle and artillery men, with two twelve-pounders to secure the new ships which had run aground at Yonkers. Next, he ordered Colonel Sargent to march up along the eastern shore with five hundred infantry, a troop of light horse, and a detachment of artillery, to prevent the landing of the enemy. Before the troops arrived at Dobbs' Ferry, the ships' boats had plundered a store there, and set it on fire.

To prevent, if possible, the men-of-war already up the river from coming down, or others from below joining them, Washington gave orders to complete the obstructions. Two hulks which lay in Spyt den Duivel Creek, were hastily ballasted by men from General Heath's division, and men were sent up to get off the ships which had run aground at Philipps' Mills, that they might be brought down and sunk immediately.

It is difficult to give an idea of the excitement caused by this new irruption of hostile ships into the waters of the Hudson, or of the various conjectures as to their object. They might intend merely to interrupt navigation, and prevent supplies coming down to the American army. They might be carrying arms and ammunition for domestic enemies skulking about the river, and only waiting an opportunity to strike a blow. They might have troops concealed on board with intent to surprise the posts in the Highlands, and cut off the intercourse between the American armies. To such a degree had the spirit of disaffection been increased, in the counties adjacent to the river, since the descent of the 'Rose' and 'Phœnix,' by the retreats and evacuation which had taken place, and so great had been the drain on the militia of those counties for the army of Washington, that, in case of insurrection, those who

remained at home and were well affected, would be outnumbered, and might easily be overpowered, especially with the aid of troops landed from the ships.

While this agitation prevailed below, fugitive river-crafts carried the news up to the Highlands that the frigates were already before Tarrytown in the Tappan Sea. Word was instantly despatched to Peter R. Livingston, president of the Provincial Congress, and startled that deliberative body, which was then seated at Fishkill, just above the Highlands. The committee of safety wrote, on the spur of the moment, to Washington. "Nothing," say they, "can be more alarming than the present situation of our State. We are daily getting the most authentic intelligence of bodies of men enlisted and armed in order to assist the enemy. We much fear that they, co-operating with the enemy, may seize such passes as will cut off the communication between the army and us, and prevent your supplies. * * * * We beg leave to suggest to your Excellency the propriety of sending a body of men to the Highlands or Peekskill, to secure the passes, prevent insurrection, and overawe the disaffected."

Washington transmitted the letter to the President of Congress on the 12th. "I have ordered up," writes he, "part of the militia from Massachusetts, under General Lincoln, to prevent, if possible, the consequences which they suggest may happen, and which there is reason to believe the conspirators have in contemplation. I am persuaded that they are on the eve of breaking out, and that they will leave nothing unessayed that will distress us, and favour the designs of the enemy, as soon as their schemes are ripe for it." In fact it was said that the Tories were arming and collecting in the Highlands under the direction of disguised officers, to aid the conspiracies formed by Governor Tryon and his adherents.

As a further precaution, an express was sent off by Washington to Colonel Tash, who, with a regiment of New Hampshire militia, was on his way from Hartford to the camp, ordering him to repair with all possible despatch to Fishkill, and there hold himself at the disposition of the Committee of Safety.

James Clinton, also, who had charge of the posts in the

Highlands, was put on the alert. That trusty officer was now a brigadier-general, having been promoted by Congress on the 8th of August. He was charged to have all boats passing up and down the river rigidly searched, and the passengers examined. Beside the usual sentries, a barge, well manned, was to patrol the river opposite to each fort every night; all barges, row-boats, and other small craft, between the forts in the Highlands and the army, were to be secured in a place of safety, to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands and giving intelligence. Moreover, a French engineer was sent up to aid in strengthening and securing the passes. The commanding officers of the counties of Lichfield and Fairfield in Connecticut had likewise orders to hold their militia in readiness to render assistance in case of insurrections in the State of New York.

So perilous appeared the condition of affairs to residents up the river, that John Jay, a member of the New York Convention, and one of the Secret Committee for the defence of the Hudson, applied for leave of absence, that he might remove his aged parents to a place of safety. A letter from him to Edward Rutledge, of the Board of War, contains this remarkable sentence. "I wish our army well stationed in the Highlands, and all the lower country desolated: we might then bid defiance to all the further efforts of the enemy in that quarter."

Nor was this a random or despairing wish. It shows the brave spirit of a leading civilian of the day, and the sacrifices that true patriots were disposed to make in the cause of independence.

But a few days previously he had held the following language to Gouverneur Morris, chairman of a special committee: "Had I been vested with absolute power in this State, I have often said, and still think, that I would last spring have desolated all *Long Island*, *Staten Island*, the city and county of *New York*, and all that part of the county of *Westchester* which lies below the mountains. I would then have stationed the main body of the army in the mountains on the east, and eight or ten thousand men in the Highlands on the west side of the river. I would have directed the river at *Fort Montgomery*, which is nearly

at the southern extremity of the mountains, to be so shallowed as to afford only depth sufficient for an *Albany* sloop, and all the southern passes and defiles in the mountains to be strongly fortified. Nor do I think the shallowing of the river a romantic scheme. Rocky mountains rise immediately from the shores. The breadth is not very great, though the depth is. But what cannot eight or ten thousand men, well worked, effect? According to this plan of defence, the State would be absolutely impregnable against all the world on the seaside, and would have nothing to fear except from the way of the lake. Should the enemy gain the river, even below the mountains, I think I foresee that a retreat would become necessary, and I can't forbear wishing that a desire of saving a few acres may not lead us into difficulties."[1]

Three days after this remarkable letter was written, the enemy's ships did gain the river; and two days afterwards, October 11th, Reed, the adjutant-general, the confidant of Washington's councils, writes to his wife from Harlem Heights: "My most sanguine views do not extend further than keeping our ground here till this campaign closes. If the enemy incline to press us, it is resolved to risk an engagement, for, if we cannot fight them on this ground, we can on none in America. The ships are the only circumstances unfavourable to us here."

On the same day that this letter was written, a small vessel, sloop-rigged, with a topsail, was descried from Mount Washington, coming down the river with a fresh breeze. It was suspected by those on the look-out to be one of the British tenders, and they gave a shot from a twelve-pounder. Their aim was unfortunately too true. Three of the crew were killed and the captain wounded. It proved to be Washington's yacht, which run up the river previously to the enemy's ships, and was now on its return.[2]

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, vol. ii. 921.
[2] Heath's Memoirs.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Lee expected in Camp—His Letter of Advice to the President of Congress—The Enemy at Throg's Neck—Washington's arrangements—Rides to Throg's Neck—The Enemy brought to a stand—Military movements—Arrival of Lee—A command assigned to him—Criticises the conduct of Congress and the Army—Council of War—The Army to move to the Mainland—Fort Washington to be kept up.

"If General Lee should be in Philadelphia," writes John Jay to Rutledge, "pray hasten his departure—he is much wanted at New York." The successes of Lee at the South were contrasted by many with the defeat on Long Island and evacuation of New York, and they began to consider him the main hope of the army. Hazard, the postmaster, writing from Harlem Heights to General Gates on the 11th, laments it as a misfortune that Lee should have been to the southward for several months past, but adds cheeringly, "he is expected here to-day."

Joseph Trumbull, the commissary-general, also writes to Gates under the same date: "General Lee is to be here this evening. He left Philadelphia on the 8th."

Lee, the object of so many hopes, was actually in the Jerseys, on his way to the camp. He writes from Amboy on the 12th to the President of Congress, informing him that the Hessians encamped opposite on Staten Island had disappeared on the preceding night, quitting the island entirely, and some great measure was believed to be in agitation. "I am confident," writes he, "they will not attack General Washington's lines; such a measure is too absurd for a man of Mr. Howe's genius: and unless they have received flattering accounts from Burgoyne that he will be able to effectuate a junction (which I conceive they have not), they will no longer remain kicking their heels at New York. They will put the place in a respectable state of defence, which, with their command of the waters, may be easily done, leave four or five thousand men, and direct their operations to a more decisive object. They will infallibly proceed either immediately up the river Delaware with their whole troops, or, what is more probable, land somewhere about South Amboy or Shrewsbury, and march straight to Trenton or Burlington. On the

supposition that this will be the case, what are we to do? What force have we? What means have we to prevent their possessing themselves of Philadelphia? General Washington's army cannot possibly keep pace with them. The length of his route is not only infinitely greater, but his obstructions almost insuperable. In short, before he could cross Hudson River, they might be lodged and strongly fortified on both banks of the Delaware. * * * For Heaven's sake, arouse yourselves! For Heaven's sake, let ten thousand men be immediately assembled, and stationed somewhere about Trenton. In my opinion your whole depends upon it. I set out immediately for headquarters, where I shall communicate my apprehension that such will be the next operation of the enemy, and urge the expediency of sparing a part of his army (if he has any to spare) for this object."[1]

On the very morning that Lee was writing this letter at Amboy, Washington received intelligence by express from General Heath, stationed above King's Bridge, that the enemy were landing with artillery on Throg's Neck,[2] in the Sound, about nine miles from the camp. Washington surmised that Howe was pursuing his original plan of getting into the rear of the American army, cutting off its supplies, which were chiefly derived from the East, and interrupting its communication with the main country. Officers were ordered to their alarm-posts, and the troops to be ready, under arms, to act as occasion might require. Word, at the same time, was sent to General Heath to dispose of the troops on his side of King's Bridge, and of two militia regiments posted on the banks of Harlem River, opposite the camp, in such manner as he should think necessary.

Having made all his arrangements as promptly as possible, Washington mounted his horse and rode over towards Throg's Neck to reconnoitre.

Throg's Neck is a peninsula in Westchester County, stretching upwards of two miles into the sound. It was separated from the mainland by a narrow creek and a marsh,

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, ii. 1008.

[2] Properly Throck's Neck, from Throckmorton, the name of the original proprietor.

and was surrounded by water every high tide. A bridge across a creek connecting with a ruined causeway across the marsh led to the mainland, and the upper end of the creek was fordable at low water. Early in the morning, eighty or ninety boats full of men had stood up the Sound from Montresor's Island and Long Island, and had landed troops to the number of four thousand on Throg's Point, the extremity of the neck. Thence their advance pushed forward toward the causeway and bridge, to secure that pass to the mainland. General Heath had been too rapid for them. Colonel Hand and his Philadelphia riflemen, the same who had checked the British advance on Long Island, had taken up the planks of the bridge, and posted themselves opposite the end of the causeway, whence they commenced firing with their rifles. They were soon reinforced by Colonel Prescott, of Bunker's Hill renown, with his regiment, and Lieutenant Bryant of the artillery, with a three-pounder. Checked at this pass, the British moved toward the head of the creek; here they found the Americans in possession of the ford, where they were reinforced by Colonel Graham, of the New York line, with his regiment, and Lieutenant Jackson of the artillery, with a six-pounder. These skilful dispositions of his troops by General Heath had brought the enemy to a stand. By the time Washington arrived in the vicinity, the British had encamped on the neck; the riflemen and yagers keeping up a scattering fire at each other across the marsh, and Captain Bryant now and then saluting the enemy with his field-piece.

Having surveyed the ground, Washington ordered works to be thrown up at the passes from the neck to the mainland. The British also threw up a work at the end of the causeway. In the afternoon nine ships, with a great number of schooners, sloops, and flat-bottomed boats full of men, passed through Hell Gate, towards Throg's Point; and information received from two deserters, gave Washington reason to believe that the greater part of the enemy's forces were gathering in that quarter. General McDougall's brigade, in which were Colonel Smallwood and the independent companies, was sent in the evening to strengthen Heath's division at King's Bridge, and to throw up works opposite the ford of Harlem River.

Greene, who had heard of the landing of the enemy at Throg's Neck, wrote over to Washington, from Fort Constitution, informing him that he had three brigades ready to join him if required. "If the troops are wanted over your side," said he, "or likely to be so, they should be got over in the latter part of the night, as the shipping may move up from below, and impede, if not totally stop the troops from passing. The tents upon Staten Island," he added, "had all been struck, as far as could be ascertained." It was plain the whole scene of action was changing.

On the 14th, General Lee arrived in camp, where he was welcomed as the harbinger of good luck. Washington was absent, visiting the posts beyond King's Bridge, and the passes leading from Throg's Neck; Lee immediately rode forth to join him. No one gave him a sincerer greeting than the commander-in-chief, who, diffident of his own military knowledge, had a high opinion of that of Lee. He immediately gave him command of the troops above King's Bridge, now the greatest part of the army, but desired that he would not exercise it for a day or two, until he had time to acquaint himself with the localities and arrangements of the post; Heath, in the interim, held the command.

Lee was evidently elevated by his successes at the South, and disposed to criticise disparagingly the military operations of other commanders. In a letter, written on the day of his arrival to his old associate in arms, General Gates, he condemns the position of the army, and censures Washington for submitting to the dictation of Congress, whose meddlesome instructions had produced it. "*Inter nos*," writes he, "the Congress seem to stumble every step. I do not mean one or two of the cattle, but the whole stable. I have been very free in delivering my opinion to them. In my opinion, General Washington is much to blame in not menacing 'em with resignation, unless they refrain from unhinging the army by their absurd interference.

"Keep us Ticonderoga; much depends upon it. We ought to have an army in the Delaware. I have roared it in the ears of Congress, but *carent auribus*. Adieu, my dear friend, if we do meet again—why, we shall smile."[1]

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, ii. 1038.

In the mean time, Congress, on the 11th of October, having heard of the ingress of the 'Phœnix,' 'Roebuck,' and 'Tartar,' passed a resolution that General Washington be desired, if it be practicable, by every art, and at whatever expense, to obstruct effectually the navigation of the North River between Fort Washington and Mount Constitution, as well to prevent the regress of the enemy's vessels lately gone up as to hinder them from receiving succours.

Under so many conflicting circumstances, Washington held a council of war on the 16th, at Lee's head-quarters, at which all the major-generals were present excepting Greene, and all the brigadiers, as well as Colonel Knox, who commanded the artillery. Letters from the Convention and from individual members of it were read, concerning the turbulence of the disaffected in the upper parts of the State; intelligence gained from deserters was likewise stated, showing the intention of the enemy to surround the camp. The policy was then discussed of remaining in their present position on Manhattan Island, and awaiting there the menaced attack: the strength of the position was urged; its being well fortified, and extremely difficult of access. Lee, in reply, scoffed at the idea of a position being good merely because its approaches were difficult. How could they think of holding a position where the enemy was so strong in front and rear; where ships had the command of the water on each side, and where King's Bridge was their only pass by which to escape from being wholly enclosed? Had not their recent experience on Long Island and at New York taught them the danger of such positions? "For my part," said he, "I would have nothing to do with the islands to which you have been clinging so pertinaciously—I would give Mr. Howe a fee-simple of them."

"After much consideration and debate," says the record of the council, "the following question was stated: Whether (it having appeared that the obstructions in the North River have proved insufficient, and that the enemy's whole force is now in our rear on Frog Point) it is now deemed possible, in our situation, to prevent the enemy from cutting off the communication with the country, and compelling us to fight them at all disadvantages, or surrender prisoners at discretion?"

All agreed, with but one dissenting voice, that it was not possible to prevent the communication from being cut off, and that one of the consequences mentioned in the question must follow.

The dissenting voice was that of General George Clinton, a brave downright man, but little versed in the science of warfare. He could not comprehend the policy of abandoning so strong a position; they were equal in number to the enemy, and, as they must fight them somewhere, could do it to more advantage there than anywhere else. Clinton felt as a guardian of the Hudson and the upper country, and wished to meet the enemy, as it were, at the very threshold.

As the resolve of Congress seemed imperative with regard to Fort Washington, that post, it was agreed, should be "retained as long as possible."

A strong garrison was accordingly placed in it, composed chiefly of troops from Magaw's and Shee's Pennsylvania regiments, the latter under Lieutenant-colonel Lambert Cadwalader, of Philadelphia. Shee having obtained leave of absence, Colonel Magaw was put in command of the post, and solemnly charged by Washington to defend it to the last extremity. The name of the opposite post on the Jersey shore, where Greene was stationed, was changed from Fort Constitution to Fort Lee, in honour of the general. Lee, in fact, was the military idol of the day. Even the family of the commander-in-chief joined in paying him homage. Colonel Tench Tilghman, Washington's aide-de-camp, in a letter to a friend, writes: "You ask if General Lee is in health, and our people bold. I answer both in the affirmative. His appearance among us has contributed not a little to the latter."

CHAPTER LXXIX.

Army arrangements—Washington at White Plains—The Enemy at Throg's Point—Skirmish of Colonel Glover—Attempt to surprise Rogers, the renegade—Troopers in a rough Country—Alarms at White Plains—Cannonading of ships at Fort Washington—March of Lee—Fortified Camp at White Plains—Reconnoitring—The affair at Chatterton Hill—Relative situation of the Armies—Change of position—Contrast of the appearance of the Troops—George Clinton's idea of strategy—Movement of the British Army—Incendiaries at White Plains.

PREVIOUS to decamping from Manhattan Island, Washington formed four divisions of the army, which were respectively assigned to Generals Lee, Heath, Sullivan (recently obtained in exchange for General Prescott), and Lincoln. Lee was stationed on Valentine's Hill on the mainland, immediately opposite King's Bridge, to cover the transportation across it of the military stores and heavy baggage. The other divisions were to form a chain of fortified posts extending about thirteen miles along a ridge of hills on the west side of the Bronx, from Lee's camp up to the village of White Plains,

Washington's head-quarters continued to be on Harlem Heights for several days, during which time he was continually in the saddle, riding about a broken, woody, and half-wild country, forming posts, and choosing sites for breastworks and redoubts. By his skilful disposition of the army, it was protected in its whole length by the Bronx, a narrow but deep stream, fringed with trees, which ran along the foot of the ridge; at the same time his troops faced and outflanked the enemy, and covered the roads along which the stores and baggage had to be transported. On the 21st, he shifted his head-quarters to Valentine's Hill, and on the 23rd to White Plains, where he stationed himself in a fortified camp.

While he was thus incessantly in action, General, now Sir William Howe (having recently, in reward for his services, been made a knight companion of the Bath), remained for six days passive in his camp on Throg's Point, awaiting the arrival of supplies and reinforcements, instead of pushing across to the Hudson, and throwing himself be-

tween Washington's army and the upper country. His inaction lost him a golden opportunity. By the time his supplies arrived, the Americans had broken up the causeway leading to the mainland, and taken positions too strong to be easily forced.

Finding himself headed in this direction, Sir William reembarked part of his troops in flat boats on the 18th, crossed Eastchester Bay, and landed on Pell's Point, at the mouth of Hutchinson's River. Here he was joined in a few hours by the main body, with the baggage and artillery, and proceeded through the manor of Pelham towards New Rochelle; still with a view to get above Washington's army.

In their march, the British were waylaid and harassed by Colonel Glover of Massachusetts, with his own, Reed's, and Shepard's regiments of infantry. Twice the British advance guard were thrown into confusion and driven back with severe loss, by a sharp fire from behind stone fences. A third time they advanced in solid columns. The Americans gave them repeated volleys, and then retreated with the loss of eight killed and thirteen wounded, among whom was Colonel Shepard. Colonel Glover, and the officers and soldiers who were with him in this skirmish, received the public thanks of Washington for their merit and good behaviour.

On the 21st, General Howe was encamped about two miles north of New Rochelle, with his outposts extending to Mamaroneck on the Sound. At the latter place was posted Colonel Rogers, the renegade, as he was called, with the Queen's Rangers, his newly-raised corps of royalists.

Hearing of this, Lord Stirling resolved, if possible, to cut off this outpost and entrap the old hunter. Colonel Haslet, of his brigade, always prompt on such occasions, undertook the exploit at the head of seven hundred and fifty of the Delaware troops, who had fought so bravely on Long Island. With these he crossed the line of the British march; came undiscovered upon the post; drove in the guard; killed a lieutenant and several men, and brought away thirty-six prisoners, with a pair of colours, sixty stand of arms, and other spoils. He missed the main prize, how-

ever. Rogers skulked off in the dark at the first fire. He was too old a partisan to be easily entrapped.

For this exploit, Colonel Haslet and his men were publicly thanked by Lord Stirling, on parade.

These, and other spirited and successful skirmishes, while they retarded the advance of the enemy, had the far more important effect of exercising and animating the American troops, and accustoming them to danger.

While in this neighbourhood, Howe was reinforced by a second division of Hessians under General Knyphausen, and a regiment of Waldeckers, both of which had recently arrived in New York. He was joined, also, by the whole of the seventeenth light-dragoons, and a part of the sixteenth, which had arrived on the 3rd instant from Ireland, with Lieutenant-colonel (afterwards Earl) Harcourt. Some of their horses had been brought with them across the sea, others had been procured since their arrival.

The Americans at first regarded these troopers with great dread. Washington, therefore, took pains to convince them, that in a rough, broken country, like the present, full of stone fences, no troops were so inefficient as cavalry. They could be waylaid and picked off by sharp-shooters from behind walls and thickets, while they could not leave the road to pursue their covert foe.

Further to inspirit them against this new enemy, he proclaimed, in general orders, a reward of one hundred dollars for every trooper brought in with his horse and accoutrements, and so on, in proportion to the completeness of the capture.

On the 25th, about two o'clock in the afternoon, intelligence was brought to head-quarters that three or four detachments of the enemy were on the march, within four miles of the camp, and the main army following in columns. The drums beat to arms; the men were ordered to their posts; an attack was expected. The day passed away, however, without any demonstration of the enemy. Howe detached none of his force on lateral expeditions, evidently meditating a general engagement. To prepare for it, Washington drew all his troops from the posts along the Bronx into the fortified camp at White Plains. Here everything remained quiet but expectant throughout the 26th.

In the morning of the 27th, which was Sunday, the heavy booming of cannon was heard from a distance, seemingly in the direction of Fort Washington. Scouts galloped off to gain intelligence. We will anticipate their report.

Two of the British frigates, at seven o'clock in the morning, had moved up the Hudson, and come to anchor near Bourdett's Ferry, below the Morris House, Washington's old head-quarters, apparently with the intention of stopping the ferry, and cutting off the communication between Fort Lee and Fort Washington. At the same time, troops made their appearance on Harlem Plains, where Lord Percy held command. Colonel Morgan immediately manned the lines with troops from the garrison of Fort Washington. The ships opened a fire to enfilade and dislodge them. A barbette battery on the cliffs of the Jersey shore, left of the ferry, fired down upon the frigate, but with little effect. Colonel Magaw got down an eighteen-pounder to the lines near the Morris House, and fired fifty or sixty rounds, two balls at a time. Two eighteen-pounders were likewise brought down from Fort Lee, and planted opposite the ships. By the fire from both shores they were hulled repeatedly.

It was the thundering of these cannonades which had reached Washington's camp at White Plains, and even startled the Highlands of the Hudson. The ships soon hoisted all sail. The foremost slipped her cable, and appeared to be in the greatest confusion. She could make no way, though towed by two boats. The other ship, seeing her distress, sent two barges to her assistance, and by the four boats she was dragged out of reach of the American fire, her pumps going all the time. "Had the tide been flood one half-hour longer," writes General Greene, "we should have sunk her."

At the time that the fire from the ships began, Lord Percy brought up his field-pieces and mortars, and made an attack upon the lines. He was resolutely answered by the troops sent down from Fort Washington, and several Hessians were killed. An occasional firing was kept up until evening, when the ships fell down the river, and the troops which had advanced on Harlem Plains drew within their lines again.

"We take this day's movement to be only a feint," writes one of the garrison at Fort Lee; "at any rate, it is little honourable to the red coats." Its chief effect was to startle the distant camp, and astound a quiet country with the thundering din of war.

The celebrated Thomas Paine, author of "The Rights of Man," and other political works, was a spectator of the affair from the rocky summit of the Palisades, on the Jersey shore.

While these things were passing at Fort Washington, Lee had struck his tents, and with the rear division, eight thousand strong, the baggage and artillery, and a train of waggons four miles long, laden with stores and ammunition, was lumbering along the rough country roads to join the main army. It was not until Monday morning, after being on the road all night, that he arrived at White Plains.

Washington's camp was situated on high ground, facing the east. The right wing stretched towards the south along a rocky hill, at the foot of which the Bronx, making an elbow, protected it in flank and rear. The left wing rested on a small, deep lake among the hills. The camp was strongly intrenched in front.

About a quarter of a mile to the right of the camp, and separated from the height on which it stood by the Bronx and a marshy interval, was a corresponding height called Chatterton's Hill. As this partly commanded the right flank, and as the intervening bend of the Bronx was easily passable, Washington had stationed on its summit a militia regiment.

The whole encampment was a temporary one, to be changed as soon as the military stores collected there could be removed; and now that General Lee was arrived, Washington rode out with him, and other general officers who were off duty, to reconnoitre a height which appeared more eligible. When arrived at it, Lee pointed to another on the north, still more commanding. "Yonder," said he, "is the ground we ought to occupy." "Let us go, then, and view it," replied Washington. They were gently riding in that direction, when a trooper came spurring up his panting horse. "The British are in the camp, sir!" cried he. "Then, gentlemen," said Washington, "we have other

business to attend to than reconnoitring." Putting spurs to his horse, he set off for the camp at full gallop, the others spurring after him.

Arrived at head-quarters, he was informed by Adjutant-general Reed, that the picket guards had all been driven in, and the enemy were advancing; but that the whole American army was posted in order of battle. "Gentlemen," said Washington, turning calmly to his companions, "you will return to your respective posts, and do the best you can."

Apprehensive that the enemy might attempt to get possession of Chatterton's Hill, he detached Colonel Haslet with his Delaware regiment, to reinforce the militia posted there. To these he soon added General McDougall's brigade, composed of Smallwood's Marylanders, Ritzema's New Yorkers, and two other regiments. These were much reduced by sickness and absence. General McDougall had command of the whole force upon the hill, which did not exceed sixteen hundred men.

These dispositions were scarcely made, when the enemy appeared glistening on the high grounds beyond the village of White Plains. They advanced in two columns, the right commanded by Sir Henry Clinton, the left by the Hessian general, De Heister. There was also a troop of horse, so formidable in the inexperienced eyes of the Americans. "It was a brilliant but formidable sight," writes Heath in his memoirs. "The sun shone bright, their arms glittered; and perhaps troops never were shown to more advantage."

For a time they halted in a wheat-field, behind a rising ground, and the general officers rode up in the centre to hold a consultation. Washington supposed they were preparing to attack him in front, and such indeed was their intention; but the commanding height of Chatterton's Hill had caught Sir William's eye, and he determined first to get possession of it.

Colonel Rahl was accordingly detached with a brigade of Hessians, to make a circuit southwardly round a piece of wood, cross the Bronx about a quarter of a mile below, and ascend the south side of the hill; while General Leslie, with a large force, British and Hessian, should advance

directly in front, throw a bridge across the stream, and charge up the hill.

A furious cannonade was now opened by the British from fifteen or twenty pieces of artillery, placed on high ground opposite the hill; under cover of which the troops of General Leslie hastened to construct the bridge. In so doing they were severely galled by two field-pieces planted on a ledge of rock on Chatterton's Hill, and in charge of Alexander Hamilton, the youthful captain of artillery. Smallwood's Maryland battalion also kept up a sharp fire of small arms.

As soon as the bridge was finished, the British and Hessians under Leslie rushed over it, formed, and charged up the hill to take Hamilton's two field-pieces. Three times the two field-pieces were discharged, ploughing the ascending columns from hill-top to river, while Smallwood's "blue and buff" Marylanders kept up their volleys of musketry.

In the meantime, Rahl and his Hessian brigade forded the Bronx lower down, pushed up the south side of the hill, and endeavoured to turn McDougall's right flank. The militia gave the general but little support. They had been dismayed at the opening of the engagement by a shot from a British cannon, which wounded one of them in the thigh, and nearly put the whole to flight. It was with the utmost difficulty McDougall had rallied them, and posted them behind a stone wall. Here they did some service, until a troop of British cavalry, having gained the crest of the hill, came on, brandishing their sabres. At their first charge the militia gave a random, scattering fire, then broke, and fled in complete confusion.

A brave stand was made on the summit of the hill by Haslet, Ritzema, and Smallwood with their troops. Twice they repulsed horse and foot, British and Hessians, until, cramped for room and greatly outnumbered, they slowly and sullenly retreated down the north side of the hill, where there was a bridge across the Bronx. Smallwood remained upon the ground for some time after the retreat had begun, and received two flesh wounds, one in the hip, the other through the arm. At the bridge over the Bronx, the retreating troops were met by General Putnam, who

was coming to their assistance with Beall's brigade. In the rear of this they marched back into the camp.

The loss on both sides, in this short but severe action, was nearly equal. That of the Americans was between three and four hundred men, killed, wounded, and taken prisoners. At first it was thought to be much more, many of the militia and a few of the regulars being counted as lost, who had scattered themselves among the hills, but afterwards returned to head-quarters.

The British army now rested with their left wing on the hill they had just taken, and which they were busy intrenching. They were extending their right wing to the left of the American lines, so that their two wings and centre formed nearly a semicircle. It was evidently their design to outflank the American camp, and get in the rear of it. The day, however, being far advanced, was suffered to pass without any further attack; but the morrow was looked forward to for a deadly conflict. Washington availed himself of this interval to have the sick and wounded, and as much of the stores as possible, removed from the camp. "The two armies," says General Heath, in his Memoirs, "lay looking at each other, within long cannon-shot. In the night time the British lighted up a vast number of fires, the weather growing pretty cold. These fires, some on the level ground, some at the foot of the hills, and at all distances to their brows, some of which were lofty, seemed to the eye to mix with the stars. The American side doubtless exhibited to them a similar appearance."

During this anxious night, Washington, was assiduously occupied throwing back his right wing to stronger ground; doubling his intrenchments and constructing three redoubts, with a line in front, on the summit of his post. These works were principally intended for defence against small arms, and were thrown up with a rapidity that to the enemy must have savoured of magic. They were, in fact, made of the stalks of Indian corn or maize, taken from a neighbouring corn-field, and pulled up with the earth clinging in masses to the large roots. "The roots of the stalks," says Heath, "and earth on them placed in the face of the works, answered the purpose of sods and fas-

cines. The tops being placed inwards, as the loose earth was thrown upon them, became as so many trees to the work, which was carried up with a despatch scarcely conceivable."

In the morning of the 29th, when Howe beheld how greatly Washington had improved his position and strengthened it, by what appeared to be solidly constructed works, he postponed his meditated assault, ordered up Lord Percy from Harlem with the fourth brigade and two battalions of the sixth, and proceeded to throw up lines and redoubts in front of the American camp, as if preparing to cannonade it. As the enemy were endeavouring to outflank him, especially on his right wing, Washington apprehended one of their objects might be to advance a part of their force, and seize on Pine's Bridge over Croton River, which would cut off his communication with the upper country. General Beall, with three Maryland regiments, was sent off with all expedition to secure that pass. It was Washington's idea that, having possession of Croton River and the passes in the Highlands, his army would be safe from further pursuit, and have time to repose after its late excessive fatigue, and would be fresh, and ready to harass the enemy should they think fit to winter up the country.

At present nothing could exceed the war-worn condition of the troops, unseasoned as they were to this kind of service. A scornful letter, written at this time by a British officer, to his friend in London, gives a picture of the ragged plight to which they were reduced, in this rainy and inclement season. "The rebel army are in so wretched a condition as to clothing and accoutrements, that I believe no nation ever saw such a set of tatterdemalions. There are few coats among them but what are out at elbows, and in a whole regiment there is scarce a pair of breeches. Judge, then, how they must be pinched by a winter's campaign. We, who are warmly clothed and well equipped, already feel it severely; for it is even now much colder than I ever felt it in England."

Alas, for the poor half-naked, weather-beaten patriots, who had to cope with these well-fed, well-clad, well-appointed mercenaries! A letter written at the very same

date (October 31), by General George Clinton, shows what, in their forlorn plight, they had to grapple with.

"We had reason," writes he, "to apprehend an attack last night, or by daylight this morning. Our lines were manned all night in consequence; and a most horrid night it was to lay in cold trenches. Uncovered as we are, daily on fatigue, making redoubts, fleches, abattis, and retreating from them and the little temporary huts made for our comfort before they are well finished, I fear will ultimately destroy our army without fighting."[1] "However," adds he, honestly, "I would not be understood to condemn measures. They may be right, for aught I know. I do not understand much of the refined art of war; it is said to consist in stratagem and deception." In a previous letter to the same friend, in a moment of hurry and alarm, he writes, "Pray let Mrs. Clinton know that I am well, and that she need not be uneasy about me. It would be too much honour to die in so good a cause."

Clinton, as we have before intimated, was an honest and ardent patriot, of resolute spirit, and plain, direct good sense; but an inexperienced soldier. His main idea of warfare was straightforward fighting; and he was greatly perplexed by the continual strategy which Washington's situation required. One of the aides-de-camp of the latter had a truer notion on the subject. "The campaign hitherto," said he, "has been a fair trial of generalship, in which I flatter myself we have had the advantage. If we, with our motley army, can keep Mr. Howe and his grand appointment at bay, I think we shall make no contemptible military figure."[2]

On the night of the 31st, Washington made another of those moves which perplexed the worthy Clinton. In the course of the night he shifted his whole position, set fire to the barns and outhouses containing forage and stores, which there was no time to remove, and, leaving a strong rear-guard on the heights, and in the neighbouring woods, retired with his main army a distance of five miles, among the high, rocky hills about Northcastle. Here he imme-

[1] George Clinton to John McKesson, Oct. 31. Am. Archives, 5th Series, ii. 1312.

[2] Tench Tilghman to William Duer, Oct. 31.

diately set to work to intrench and fortify himself; his policy at this time being, as he used to say, "to fight with the spade and mattock."

General Howe did not attempt to dislodge him from this fastness. He at one time ordered an attack on the rear-guard, but a violent rain prevented it, and for two or three days he remained seemingly inactive. "All matters are as quiet as if the enemy were one hundred miles distant from us," writes one of Washington's aides, on the 2nd of November. During the night of the 4th this quiet was interrupted. A mysterious sound was heard in the direction of the British camp, like the rumbling of waggons and artillery. At daybreak the meaning of it was discovered. The enemy were decamping. Long trains were observed, defiling across the hilly country, along the roads leading to Dobbs' Ferry on the Hudson. The movement continued for three successive days, until their whole force, British and Hessians, disappeared from White Plains.

The night after their departure a party of Americans, heated with liquor, set fire to the court-house and other edifices in the village, as if they had belonged to the enemy; an outrage which called forth a general order from Washington, expressive of his indignation, and threatening the perpetrators with signal punishment when detected. We notice this matter, because, in British accounts, the burning of those buildings had been charged upon Washington himself; being, no doubt, confounded with the burning of the barns and outhouses ordered by him on shifting his encampment.

CHAPTER LXXX.

Conjectures as to the intention of the Enemy—Consequent precautions Correspondence with Greene respecting Fort Washington—Distribution of the Army—Lee left in command at Northcastle—Instructions to him—Washington at Peekskill—Visits to the Posts in the Highlands.

VARIOUS were the speculations at head-quarters on the sudden movement of the enemy. Washington writes to General William Livingston (now Governor of the Jerseys): "They have gone toward the North River and

King's Bridge. Some suppose they are going into winter quarters, and will sit down in New York without doing more than investing Fort Washington. I cannot subscribe wholly to this opinion myself. That they will invest Fort Washington is a matter of which there can be no doubt: and I think there is a strong probability that General Howe will detach a part of his force to make an incursion into the Jerseys, provided he is going to New York. He must attempt something on account of his reputation, for what has he done as yet with his great army?"

In the same letter he expressed his determination, as soon as it should appear that the present manœuvre was a real retreat, and not a feint, to throw over a body of troops into the Jerseys to assist in checking Howe's progress. He, moreover, recommended to the governor to have the militia of that state put on the best-possible footing, and a part of them held in readiness to take the place of the State levies, whose term of service would soon expire. He advised, also, that the inhabitants contiguous to the water should be prepared to remove their stock, grain, effects, and carriages on the earliest notice.

In a letter of the same date he charged General Greene, should Howe invest Fort Washington with part of his force, to give the garrison all possible assistance.

On the following day (November 8th), his aide-de-camp, Colonel Tilghman, writes to General Greene from headquarters: "The enemy are at Dobbs' Ferry with a great number of boats, ready to go into Jersey, *or proceed up the river*."

Greene doubted any intention of the enemy to cross the river; it might only be a feint to mislead; still, as a precaution, he had ordered troops up from the flying camp, and was posting them opposite Dobbs' Ferry, and at other passes where a landing might be attempted; the whole being under the command of General Mercer.

Affairs at Fort Washington soon settled the question of the enemy's intentions with regard to it. Lord Percy took his station with a body of troops before the lines to the south. Knyphausen advanced on the north. The Americans had previously abandoned Fort Independence, burnt its barracks, and removed the stores and cannon. Crossing

King's Bridge, Knyphausen took a position between it and Fort Washington. The approach to the fort, on this side, was exceedingly steep and rocky, as, indeed, were all its approaches excepting that on the south, where the country was more open, and the ascent gradual. The fort could not hold within its walls above one thousand men; the rest of the troops were distributed about the lines and outworks. While the fort was thus menaced, the chevaux-de-frise had again proved inefficient. On the night of the 5th a frigate and two transports, bound up to Dobbs' Ferry, with supplies for Howe's army, had broken through; though, according to Greene's account, not without being considerably shattered by the batteries.

Informed of these facts, Washington wrote to Greene on the 8th: "If we cannot prevent vessels from passing up the river, and the enemy are possessed of all the surrounding country, what valuable purpose can it answer to hold a post from which the expected benefit cannot be had? I am, therefore, inclined to think that it will not be prudent to hazard the men and stores at Mount Washington; but, as you are on the spot, I leave it to you to give such orders as to evacuating Mount Washington as you may judge best, and so far revoking the orders given to Colonel Magaw to defend it to the last."

Accounts had been received at head-quarters of a considerable movement on the preceding evening (November 7th) among the enemy's boats at Dobbs' Ferry, with the intention, it was said, of penetrating the Jerseys, and falling down upon Fort Lee. Washington, therefore, in the same letter, directed Greene to have all the stores not necessary to the defence removed immediately, and to destroy all the stock, the hay and grain, in the neighbourhood, which the owners refused to remove. "Experience has shown," adds he, "that a contrary conduct is not of the least advantage to the poor inhabitants, from whom all their effects of every kind are taken without distinction and without the least satisfaction."

Greene, in reply (November 9th), adhered with tenacity to the policy of maintaining Fort Washington. "The enemy," said he, "must invest it with double the number of men required for its defence. They must keep troops at

King's Bridge to cut off all communication with the country, and in considerable force, for fear of an attack." He did not consider the fort in immediate danger. Colonel Magaw thought it would take the enemy until the end of December to carry it. In the mean time the garrison could at any time be brought off, and even the stores removed, should matters grow desperate. If the enemy should not find it an object of importance, they would not trouble themselves about it; if they should, it would be a proof that they felt an injury from its being maintained. The giving it up would open for them a free communication with the country by the way of King's Bridge.[1]

It is doubtful when or where Washington received this letter, as he left the camp at Northcastle at eleven o'clock of the following morning. There being still considerable uncertainty as to the intentions of the enemy, all his arrangements were made accordingly. All the troops belonging to the States west of the Hudson were to be stationed in the Jerseys, under command of General Putnam. Lord Stirling had already been sent forward with the Maryland and Virginia troops to Peekskill to cross the river at King's Ferry. Another division, composed of Connecticut and Massachusetts troops, under General Heath, was to co-operate with the brigade of New York militia, under General George Clinton, in securing the Highland posts on both sides of the river.

The troops which would remain at Northcastle, after the departure of Heath and his division, were to be commanded by Lee. Washington's letter of instructions to that general is characterised by his own modesty, and his deference for Lee's superior military experience. He suggests, rather than orders; yet his letter is sufficiently explicit. "A little time now," writes he, "must manifest the enemy's designs, and point out to you the measures proper to be pursued by that part of the army under your command. I shall give no directions, therefore, on this head, having the most entire confidence in your judgment and military exertions. One thing, however, I will suggest, namely, that the appearance of embarking troops for the Jerseys

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, iii. 618.

may be intended as a feint to weaken us, and render the post we now hold more vulnerable; or the enemy may find that troops are assembled with more expedition, and in greater numbers, than they expected, on the Jersey shore, to oppose them; and, as it is possible, from one or other of these motives, that they may yet pay the party under your command a visit, it will be unnecessary, I am persuaded, to recommend to you the propriety of putting this post, if you stay at it, into a proper posture of defence, and guarding against surprises. But I would recommend it to your consideration, whether, under the suggestion above, your retiring to Croton Bridge, and some strong post still more easterly (covering the passes through the Highlands), may not be more advisable than to run the hazard of an attack with unequal numbers. At any rate, I think all your baggage and stores, except such as are necessary for immediate use, ought to be to the northward of Croton River. * * * * You will consider the post at Croton's (or Pine's) Bridge as under your immediate care. * * * * If the enemy should remove the whole, or the greater part of their force to the west side of Hudson's river, I have no doubt of your following, with all possible despatch, leaving the militia and invalids to cover the frontiers of Connecticut in case of need."

We have been minute in stating these matters, from their bearing on subsequent operations.

On the 10th of November, Washington left the camp at Northcastle, at 11 o'clock, and arrived at Peekskill at sunset; where General Heath, with his division, had preceded him by a few hours. Lord Stirling was there, likewise, having effected the transportation of the Maryland and Virginia troops across the river, and landed them at the ferry south of Stony Point; though a better landing was subsequently found north of the point. His lordship had thrown out a scouting party in the advance, and a hundred men to take possession of a gap in the mountain, through which a road passed towards the Jerseys.

Washington was now at the entrance of the Highlands, that grand defile of the Hudson, the object of so much precaution and solicitude. On the following morning, accompanied by Generals Heath, Stirling, James and

George Clinton, Mifflin, and others, he made a military visit in boats to the Highland posts. Fort Montgomery was in a considerable state of forwardness, and a work in the vicinity was projected to co-operate with it. Fort Constitution commanded a sudden bend of the river, but Lord Stirling, in his report of inspection, had intimated that the fort itself was commanded by West Point opposite. A glance of the eye, without going on shore, was sufficient to convince Washington of the fact. A fortress subsequently erected on that point, has been considered the key of the Highlands.

On the morning of the 12th, at an early hour, Washington rode out with General Heath to reconnoitre the east side of the Hudson, at the gorge of the Highlands. Henry Wisner, in a report to the New York Convention, had mentioned a hill to the north of Peekskill, so situated, with the road winding along the side of it, that ten men on the top, by rolling down stones, might prevent ten thousand from passing. "I believe," said he, "nothing more need be done than to keep great quantities of stones at the different places where the troops must pass, if they attempt penetrating the mountains."

Near Robinson's Bridge, in this vicinity, about two miles from Peekskill, Washington chose a place where troops should be stationed to cover the south entrance into the mountains; and here, afterwards, was established an important military depot called Continental Village.

On the same day (12th), he wrote to General Lee, inclosing a copy of resolutions just received from Congress, respecting levies for the new army, showing the importance of immediately beginning the recruiting service. If no commissioners arrived from Rhode Island, he was to appoint the officers recommended to that State by General Greene. "I cannot conclude," adds he, "without reminding you of the military and other stores about your encampment, and at Northcastle, and to press the removal of them above Croton Bridge, or such other places of security as you may think proper. General Howe, having sent no part of his force to Jersey yet, makes the measure more necessary, as he may turn his views another way, and attempt their destruction."

It was evidently Washington's desire that Lee should post himself, as soon as possible, beyond the Croton, where he would be safe from surprise, and at hand to throw his troops promptly across the Hudson, should the Jerseys be invaded.

Having made all these surveys and arrangements, Washington placed Heath in the general command of the Highlands, with written instructions to fortify the passes with all possible despatch, and directions how the troops were to be distributed on both sides of the river; and here we take occasion to give some personal notice of this trusty officer.

Heath was now in the fortieth year of his age. Like many of the noted officers of the Revolution, he had been brought up in rural life, on an hereditary farm near Boston; yet, according to his own account, though passionately fond of agricultural pursuits, he had also, almost from childhood, a great relish for military affairs, and had studied every treatise on the subject in the English language, so that he considered himself "fully acquainted with the *theory* of war, in all its branches and duties, from the private soldier to the commander-in chief."

He describes himself to be of a middling stature, light complexion, very corpulent and bald-headed, so that the French officers who served in America, compared him, in person, to the Marquis of Granby.[1]

Such was the officer intrusted with the command of the Highland passes, and encamped at Peekskill, their portal. We shall find him faithful to his trust; scrupulous in obeying the letter of his instructions; but sturdy and punctilious in resisting any undue assumption of authority.

[1] Heath's Memoirs.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

Affairs on Lake Champlain—Gates at Ticonderoga—Arnold's Flotilla—Military Preparations of Sir Guy Carleton at St. John's—Nautical Encounters—Gallant Conduct of Arnold and Waterbury—Carleton in possession of Crown Point—His return to Canada and Winter Quarters.

During his brief and busy sojourn at Peekskill, Washington received important intelligence from the northern army, especially that part of it on Lake Champlain, under the command of General Gates. A slight retrospect of affairs in that quarter is proper before we proceed to narrate the eventful campaign in the Jerseys.

The preparations for the defence of Ticonderoga, and the nautical service on the lake, had met with difficulties at every step. At length, by the middle of August, a small flotilla was completed, composed of a sloop and schooner, each of twelve guns (six and four-pounders), two schooners mounting eight guns each, and five gondolas, each of three guns. The flotilla was subsequently augmented, and the command given by Gates to Arnold, in compliance with the advice of Washington, who had a high opinion of that officer's energy, intrepidity, and fertility in expedients.

Sir Guy Carleton, in the meantime, was straining every nerve for the approaching conflict. The successes of the British forces on the seaboard had excited the zealous rivalry of the forces in Canada. The commanders, newly arrived, were fearful the war might be brought to a close before they could have an opportunity to share in the glory. Hence the ardour with which they encountered and vanquished obstacles which might otherwise have appeared insuperable. Vessels were brought from England in pieces, and put together at St. Johns; boats of various kinds and sizes were transported over land, or dragged up the rapids of the Sorel. The soldiers shared with the seamen in the toil. The Canadian farmers, also, were taken from their agricultural pursuits, and compelled to aid in these, to them, unprofitable labours. Sir Guy was full of hope and ardour. Should he get the command of Lakes Champlain and George, the northern part of New York would be at his mercy; before winter set in he might

gain possession of Albany; he would then be able to co-operate with General Howe in severing and subduing the northern and southern provinces, and bringing the war to a speedy and triumphant close.

In despite of every exertion, three months elapsed before his armament was completed. Winter was fast approaching. Before it arrived, the success of his brilliant plan required that he should fight his way across Lake Champlain; carry the strong posts of Crown Point and Ticonderoga; traverse Lake George, and pursue a long and dangerous march through a wild and rugged country, beset with forests and morasses, to Albany. That was the first post to the southward, where he expected to find rest and winter-quarters for his troops.[1]

By the month of October between twenty and thirty sail were afloat, and ready for action. The flag-ship (the 'Inflexible'), mounted eighteen twelve-pounders; the rest were gunboats, a gondola, and a flat-bottomed vessel called a radeau, and named the 'Thunderer;' carrying a battery of six twenty-four and twelve six-pounders, besides howitzers. The gunboats mounted brass field-pieces and howitzers. Seven hundred seamen navigated the fleet; two hundred of them were volunteers from the transports. The guns were worked by detachments from the corps of artillery. In a word, according to British accounts, "no equipment of the kind was ever better appointed, or more amply furnished with every kind of provision necessary for the intended service."[2]

Captain Pringle conducted the armament; but Sir Guy Carleton was too full of zeal, and too anxious for the event, not to head the enterprise; he accordingly took his station on the deck of the flag-ship. They made sail early in October, in quest of the American squadron, which was said to be abroad upon the lake. Arnold, however, being ignorant of the strength of the enemy, and unwilling to encounter a superior force in the open lake, had taken his post under cover of Valcour Island, in the upper part of a deep channel, or strait, between that island and the mainland. His force consisted of three schooners, two

[1] Civil War in America, vol. i. p. 212. [2] Ibid., p. 211.

sloops, three galleys, and eight gondolas; carrying in all seventy guns, many of them eighteen-pounders.

The British ships, sweeping past Cumberland Head with a fair wind and flowing sail on the morning of the 11th, had left the southern end of Valcour Island astern, when they discovered Arnold's flotilla anchored behind it in a line extending across the strait, so as not to be outflanked. They immediately hauled close to the wind, and tried to beat up into the channel. The wind, however, did not permit the largest of them to enter. Arnold took advantage of the circumstance. He was on board of the galley 'Congress,' and, leaving the line, advanced with two other galleys and the schooner 'Royal Savage,' to attack the smaller vessels as they entered before the large ones could come up. About twelve o'clock, the enemy's schooner 'Carleton' opened a brisk fire upon the 'Royal Savage' and the galleys; it was as briskly returned. Seeing the enemy's gunboats approaching, the Americans endeavoured to return to the line. In so doing the 'Royal Savage' ran aground. Her crew set her on fire and abandoned her. In about an hour the British brought all their gunboats in a range across the lower part of the channel, within musket-shot of the Americans, the schooner 'Carleton' in the advance. They landed, also, a large number of Indians on the island, to keep up a galling fire from the shore upon the Americans with their rifles. The action now became general, and was severe and sanguinary. The Americans, finding themselves thus hemmed in by a superior force, fought with desperation. Arnold pressed with his galley into the hottest of the fight. The 'Congress,' was hulled several times, received seven shots between wind and water, was shattered in mast and rigging, and many of the crew were killed or wounded. The ardour of Arnold increased with his danger. He cheered on his men by voice and example, often pointing the guns with his own hands. He was ably seconded by Brigadier-general Waterbury, in the 'Washington' galley, which, like his own vessel, was terribly cut up. The contest lasted throughout the day. Carried on as it was within a narrow compass, and on a tranquil lake, almost every shot took effect. The fire of the Indians from the shore was less deadly than had been

expected; but their whoops and yells, mingling with the rattling of the musketry, and the thundering of the cannon, increased the horrors of the scene. Volumes of smoke rose above the woody shores, which echoed with the unusual din of war, and for a time this lovely recess of a beautiful and peaceful lake was rendered a perfect pandemonium.

The evening drew nigh, yet the contest was undecided. Captain Pringle, after a consultation with Sir Guy Carleton, called off the smaller vessels which had been engaged, and anchored his whole squadron in a line as near as possible to the Americans, so as to prevent their escape; trusting to capture the whole of them when the wind should prove favourable, so that he could bring his large vessels into action.

Arnold, however, sensible that with his inferior and crippled force all resistance would be unavailing, took advantage of a dark, cloudy night, and a strong north wind; his vessels slipped silently through the enemy's line without being discovered, one following a light on the stern of the other; and by daylight they were out of sight. They had to anchor, however, at Schuyler's Island, about ten miles up the lake, to stop leaks and make repairs. Two of the gondolas were here sunk, being past remedy. About noon the retreat was resumed, but the wind had become adverse, and they made little progress. Arnold's galley, the 'Congress,' the 'Washington' galley, and four gondolas, all which had suffered severely in the late fight, fell astern of the rest of the squadron in the course of the night. In the morning, when the sun lifted a fog which had covered the lake, they beheld the enemy within a few miles of them in full chase, while their own comrades were nearly out of sight, making the best of their way for Crown Point.

It was now an anxious trial of speed and seamanship. Arnold, with the crippled relics of his squadron, managed by noon to get within a few leagues of Crown Point, when they were overtaken by the 'Inflexible,' the 'Carleton,' and the schooner 'Maria' of fourteen guns. As soon as they came up, they poured in a tremendous fire. The 'Washington' galley, already shattered, and having lost most of her officers, was compelled to strike, and General

Waterbury and the crew were taken prisoners. Arnold had now to bear the brunt of the action. For a long time he was engaged within musket-shot with the 'Inflexible' and the two schooners, until his galley was reduced to a wreck and one-third of the crew were killed. The gondolas were nearly in the same desperate condition, yet the men stood stoutly to their guns. Seeing resistance vain, Arnold determined that neither vessels nor crews should fall into the hands of the enemy. He ordered the gondolas to run on shore in a small creek in the neighbourhood, the men to set fire to them as soon as they grounded, to wade on shore with their muskets, and keep off the enemy until they were consumed. He did the same with his own galley; remaining on board of her until she was in flames, lest the enemy should get possession and strike his flag, which was kept flying to the last.

He now set off with his gallant crew, many of whom were wounded, by a road through the woods to Crown Point, where he arrived at night, narrowly escaping an Indian ambush. Two schooners, two galleys, one sloop, and one gondola, the remnant which had escaped of this squadron, were at anchor at the Point, and General Waterbury and most of his men arrived there the next day on parole. Seeing that the place must soon fall into the hands of the enemy, they set fire to the houses, destroyed everything they could not carry away, and embarking in the vessels made sail for Ticonderoga.

The loss of the Americans in these two actions is said to have been between eighty and ninety men; that of the British about forty. It is worthy of mention, that among the young officers in Sir Guy Carleton's squadron was Edward Pellew, who afterwards rose to renown as Admiral Viscount Exmouth, celebrated, among other things, for his victory at Algiers.

The conduct of Arnold in these naval affairs gained him new laurels. He was extolled for the judgment with which he chose his position, and brought his vessels into action; for his masterly retreat, and for the self-sacrificing devotion with which he exposed himself to the overwhelming force of the enemy in covering the retreat of part of his flotilla.

Sir Guy Carleton took possession of the ruined works at Crown Point, where he was soon joined by the army. He made several movements by land and water, as if meditating an attack upon Ticonderoga; pushing strong detachments on both sides of the lake, which approached within a small distance of the fort, while one vessel appeared within cannon-shot of a lower battery, sounding the depth of the channel, until a few shot obliged her to retire. General Gates, in the mean time, strengthened his works with incessant assiduity, and made every preparation for an obstinate defence. A strong southerly wind prevented the enemy's ships from advancing to attack the lines, and gave time for the arrival of reinforcements of militia to the garrison. It also afforded time for Sir Guy Carleton to cool in ardour, and calculate the chances and the value of success. The post, from its strength, and the apparent number and resolution of the garrison, could not be taken without great loss of life. If taken, the season was now too far advanced to think of passing Lake George, and exposing the army to the perils of a winter campaign in the inhospitable and impracticable wilds to the southward. Ticonderoga, too, could not be kept during the winter, so that the only result of the capture would be the reduction of the works and the taking of some cannon; all which damage the Americans could remedy before the opening of the summer campaign. If, however, the defence should be obstinate, the British army, even if successful, might sustain a loss sufficient to cripple its operations in the coming year.[1]

These, and other prudential reasons, induced Carleton to give up all attempt upon the fortress at present; wherefore, re-embarking his troops, he returned to St. Johns, and cantoned them in Canada for the winter. It was not until about the 1st of November that a reconnoitring party, sent out from Ticonderoga by General Gates, brought him back intelligence that Crown Point was abandoned by the enemy, and not a hostile sail in sight. All apprehensions of an attack upon Ticonderoga during the present year were at an end, and many of the troops

[1] Civil War in America, vol. i. p. 214.

stationed there were already on their march toward Albany.

Such was the purport of the news from the north received by Washington at Peekskill. It relieved him for the present from all anxiety respecting affairs on Lake Champlain, and gave him the prospect of reinforcements from that quarter.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

Washington crosses the Hudson—Arrives at Fort Lee—Affairs at Fort Washington—Question about its abandonment—Movements of Howe—The Fort summoned to surrender—Refusal of Colonel Magaw—The Fort attacked—Capture of the Fort and Garrison—Comments of Washington on the state of affairs.

On the morning of the 12th of November, Washington crossed the Hudson, to the ferry below Stony Point, with the residue of the troops destined for the Jerseys. Far below were to be descried the 'Phœnix,' the 'Roebuck,' and the 'Tartar,' at anchor in the broad waters of Haverstraw Bay and the Tappan Sea, guarding the lower ferries. The army, thus shut out from the nearer passes, was slowly winding its way by a circuitous route through the gap in the mountains, which Lord Stirling had secured. Leaving the troops which had just landed to pursue the same route to the Hackensack, Washington, accompanied by Colonel Reed, struck a direct course for Fort Lee, being anxious about affairs at Fort Washington. He arrived there on the following day, and found, to his disappointment, that General Greene had taken no measures for the evacuation of that fortress; but, on the contrary, had reinforced it with a part of Colonel Durkee's regiment, and the regiment of Colonel Rawlings, so that its garrison now numbered upwards of two thousand men; a great part, however, were militia. Washington's orders for its evacuation had, in fact, been discretionary, leaving the execution of them to Greene's judgment, "as being on the spot." The latter had differed in opinion as to the policy of such a measure; and Colonel Magaw, who had charge of the fortress, was likewise confident it might be maintained.

Colonel Reed was of opposite counsels; but then he was

personally interested in the safety of the garrison. It was composed almost entirely of Pennsylvania troops under Magaw and Lambert Cadwalader; excepting a small detachment of Maryland riflemen commanded by Otho H. Williams. They were his friends and neighbours, the remnant of the brave men who had suffered so severely under Atlee and Smallwood.[1] The fort was now invested on all sides but one; and the troops under Howe which had been encamped at Dobbs' Ferry, were said to be moving down toward it. Reed's solicitude was not shared by the garrison itself. Colonel Magaw, its brave commander, still thought it was in no immediate danger.

Washington was much perplexed. The main object of Howe was still a matter of doubt with him. He could not think that Sir William was moving his whole force upon that fortress, to invest which a part would be sufficient. He suspected an ulterior object, probably a Southern expedition, as he was told a large number of ships were taking in wood and water at New York. He resolved, therefore, to continue a few days in this neighbourhood, during which he trusted the designs of the enemy would be more apparent; in the mean time he would distribute troops at Brunswick, Amboy, Elizabethtown, and Fort Lee, so as to be ready at those various points, to check any incursions into the Jerseys.

In a letter to the President of Congress he urged for an increase of ordnance and field-artillery. The rough, hilly country east of the Hudson, and the strongholds and fastnesses of which the Americans had possessed themselves, had prevented the enemy from profiting by the superiority of their artillery; but this would not be the case, should the scene of action change to an open champaign country, like the Jerseys.

Washington was mistaken in his conjecture as to Sir William Howe's design. The capture of Fort Washington was, at present, his main object; and he was encamped on Fordham Heights, not far from King's Bridge, until preliminary steps should be taken. In the night of the 14th, thirty flat-bottomed boats stole quietly up the Hudson,

[1] W. B. Reed's Life of Reed, i. 252.

passed the American forts undiscovered, and made their way through Spyt den Duivel Creek into Harlem River. The means were thus provided for crossing that river and landing before unprotected parts of the American works.

On the 15th, General Howe sent in a summons to surrender, with a threat of extremities should he have to carry the place by assault. Magaw, in his reply, intimated a doubt that General Howe would execute a threat "so unworthy of himself and the British nation; but give me leave," added he, "to assure his Excellency, that, actuated by the most glorious cause that mankind ever fought in, I am determined to defend this post to the very last extremity."

Apprised by the colonel of his peril, General Greene sent over reinforcements, with an exhortation to him to persist in his defence; and despatched an express to Washington, who was at Hackensack, where the troops which had crossed from Peekskill were encamped. It was nightfall when Washington arrived at Fort Lee. Greene and Putnam were over at the besieged fortress. He threw himself into a boat, and had partly crossed the river, when he met those generals returning. They informed him of the garrison's having been reinforced, and assured him that it was in high spirits, and capable of making a good defence. It was with difficulty, however, they could prevail on him to return with them to the Jersey shore, for he was excessively excited.

Early the next morning (16th), Magaw made his dispositions for the expected attack. His forces, with the recent addition, amounted to nearly three thousand men. As the fort could not contain above a third of that number, most of them were stationed about the outworks.

Colonel Lambert Cadwalader, with eight hundred Pennsylvanians, was posted in the outer lines, about two miles and a half south of the fort, the side menaced by Lord Percy with sixteen hundred men. Colonel Rawlings, of Maryland, with a body of troops, many of them riflemen, was stationed by a three-gun battery, on a rocky, precipitous hill, north of the fort, and between it and Spyt den Duivel Creek. Colonel Baxter, of Bucks County, Penn-

sylvania, with his regiment of militia, was posted east of the fort, on rough, woody heights, bordering the Harlem River, to watch the motions of the enemy, who had thrown up redoubts on high and commanding ground, on the opposite side of the river, apparently to cover the crossing and landing of troops.

Sir William Howe had planned four simultaneous attacks; one on the north by Knyphausen, who was encamped on the York side of King's Bridge, within cannon-shot of Fort Washington, but separated from it by high and rough hills, covered with almost impenetrable woods. He was to advance in two columns, formed by detachments made from the Hessians of his corps, the brigade of Rahl, and the regiment of Waldeckers. The second attack was to be by two battalions of light infantry and two battalions of guards, under Brigadier-general Mathew, who was to cross Harlem River in flat-boats, under cover of the redoubts above-mentioned, and to land on the right of the fort. This attack was to be supported by the first and second grenadiers, and a regiment of light infantry, under command of Lord Cornwallis. The third attack, intended as a feint to distract the attention of the Americans, was to be by Colonel Sterling, with the forty-second regiment, who was to drop down the Harlem River in bateaux, to the left of the American lines, facing New York. The fourth attack was to be on the south, by Lord Percy, with the English and Hessian troops under his command, on the right flank of the American entrenchments.[1]

About noon, a heavy cannonade thundering along the rocky hills, and sharp volleys of musketry, proclaimed that the action was commenced. Knyphausen's division was pushing on from the north in two columns, as had been arranged. The right was led by Colonel Rahl, the left by himself. Rahl essayed to mount a steep, broken height called Cock Hill, which rises from Spyt den Duivel Creek, and was covered with woods. Knyphausen undertook a hill rising from the King's Bridge road, but soon found himself entangled in a woody defile,

[1] Sir William Howe to Lord George Germaine.

difficult to penetrate, and where his Hessians were exposed to the fire of the three-gun battery, and Rawlings' riflemen.

While this was going on at the north of the fort, General Mathew, with his light infantry and guards, crossed the Harlem River in the flat-boats, under cover of a heavy fire from the redoubts.

He made good his landing, after being severely handled by Baxter and his men, from behind rocks and trees, and the breastworks thrown up on the steep river bank. A short contest ensued. Baxter, while bravely encouraging his men, was killed by a British officer. His troops, overpowered by numbers, retreated to the fort. General Mathew now pushed on with his guards and light infantry to cut off Cadwalader. That officer had gallantly defended the lines against the attack of Lord Percy, until informed that Colonel Sterling was dropping down Harlem River in bateaux to flank the lines, and take him in the rear. He sent off a detachment to oppose his landing. They did it manfully. About ninety of Sterling's men were killed or wounded in their boats, but he persevered, landed, and forced his way up a steep height, which was well defended, gained the summit, forced a redoubt, and took nearly two hundred prisoners. Thus doubly assailed, Cadwalader was obliged to retreat to the fort. He was closely pursued by Percy with his English troops and Hessians, but turned repeatedly on his pursuers. Thus he fought his way to the fort, with the loss of several killed and more taken prisoners; but marking his track by the number of Hessians slain.

The defence on the north side of the fort was equally obstinate and unsuccessful. Rawlings with his Maryland riflemen and the aid of the three-gun battery, had for some time kept the left column of Hessians and Waldeckers under Knyphausen at bay. At length Colonel Rahl, with the right column of the division, having forced his way directly up the north side of the steep hill at Spyt den Duivel Creek, came upon Rawlings' men, whose rifles, from frequent discharges, had become foul and almost useless, drove them from their strong post, and followed them until within a hundred yards of the fort, where he

was joined by Knyphausen, who had slowly made his way through dense forest and over felled trees. Here they took post behind a large stone house, and sent in a flag, with a second summons to surrender.

Washington, surrounded by several of his officers, had been an anxious spectator of the battle from the opposite side of the Hudson. Much of it was hidden from him by intervening hills and forests; but the roar of cannonry from the valley of Harlem River, the sharp and incessant reports of rifles, and the smoke rising above the tree-tops, told him of the spirit with which the assault was received at various points, and gave him for a time a hope that the defence might be successful. The action about the lines to the south lay open to him, and could be distinctly seen through a telescope; and nothing encouraged him more than the gallant style in which Cadwalader with an inferior force maintained his position. When he saw him, however, assailed in flank, the line broken, and his troops, overpowered by numbers, retreating to the fort, he gave up the game as lost. The worst sight of all, was to behold his men cut down and bayoneted by the Hessians while begging quarter. It is said so completely to have overcome him, that he wept "with the tenderness of a child."

Seeing the flag go into the fort from Knyphausen's division, and surmising it to be a summons to surrender, he wrote a note to Magaw, telling him that if he could hold out until evening, and the place could not be maintained, he would endeavour to bring off the garrison in the night. Captain Gooch, of Boston, a brave and daring man, offered to be the bearer of the note. "He ran down to the river, jumped into a small boat, pushed over the river, landed under the bank, ran up to the fort, and delivered the message:—came out, ran and jumped over the broken ground, dodging the Hessians, some of whom struck at him with their pieces, and others attempted to thrust him with their bayonets; escaping through them, he got to his boat and returned to Fort Lee."[1]

Washington's message arrived too late. "The fort was so crowded by the garrison, and the troops which had

[1] Heath's Memoirs, p. 86.

retreated into it, that it was difficult to move about. The enemy, too, were in possession of the little redoubts around, and could have poured in showers of shells and ricochet balls that would have made dreadful slaughter. It was no longer possible for Magaw to get his troops to man the lines; he was compelled, therefore, to yield himself and his garrison prisoners of war. The only terms granted them were, that the men should retain their baggage and the officers their swords.

The sight of the American flag hauled down, and the British flag waving in its place, told Washington of the surrender. His instant care was for the safety of the upper country, now that the lower defences of the Hudson were at an end. Before he knew anything about the terms of capitulation, he wrote to General Lee, informing him of the surrender, and calling his attention to the passes of the Highlands and those which lay east of the river; begging him to have such measures adopted for their defence as his judgment should suggest to be necessary. "I do not mean," added he, "to advise abandoning your present post, contrary to your own opinion; but only to mention my own ideas of the importance of those passes, and that you cannot give too much attention to their security, by having works erected on the most advantageous places for that purpose."

Lee, in reply, objected to removing from his actual encampment at Northcastle. "It would give us," said he, "the air of being frightened; it would expose a fine, fertile country to their ravages; and I must add, that we are as secure as we could be in any position whatever." After stating that he should deposit his stores, &c., in a place fully as safe, and more central than Peekskill, he adds: "As to ourselves, light as we are, several retreats present themselves. In short, if we keep a good look-out, we are in no danger; but I must entreat your Excellency to enjoin the officers posted at Fort Lee, to give us the quickest intelligence, if they observe any embarkation on the North River." As to the affair of Fort Washington, all that Lee observed on the subject was: "Oh, general, why would you be over-persuaded by men of inferior judgment to your own? It was a cursed affair."

Lee's allusion to men of inferior judgment, was principally aimed at Greene, whose influence with the commander-in-chief seems to have excited the jealousy of other officers of rank. So Colonel Tilghman, Washington's aide-de-camp, writes on the 17th, to Robert R. Livingston, of New York, "We were in a fair way of finishing the campaign with credit to ourselves, and, I think, to the disgrace of Mr. Howe; and, had the general followed his own opinion, the garrison would have been withdrawn immediately upon the enemy's falling down from Dobbs' Ferry. But General Greene was positive that our forces might at any time be drawn off under the guns of Fort Lee. Fatal experience has evinced the contrary."[1]

Washington's own comments on the reduction of the fort, made in a letter to his brother Augustine, are worthy of special note. "This is a most unfortunate affair, and has given me great mortification; as we have lost, not only two thousand men,[2] that were there, but a good deal of artillery, and some of the best arms we had. And what adds to my mortification is, that this post, after the last ships went past it, was held contrary to my wishes and opinion, as I conceived it to be a hazardous one; but it having been determined on by a full council of general officers, and a resolution of Congress having been received, strongly expressive of their desire that the channel of the river, which we had been labouring to stop for a long time at that place, might be obstructed, if possible; and knowing that this could not be done unless there were batteries to protect the obstructions, I did not care to give an absolute order for withdrawing the garrison till I could get round and see the situation of things; and then it became too late, as the place was invested. Upon the passing of the last ships, I had given it as my opinion to General Greene, under whose care it was, that it would be best to evacuate the place; but, as the order was discretionary, and his opinion differed from mine, it was unhappily delayed too long, to my great grief."

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, iii. 780.

[2] The number of prisoners, as returned by Sir William Howe, was 2,818, of whom 2,607 were privates. They were marched off to New York at midnight.

The correspondence of Washington with his brother is full of gloomy anticipations. "In ten days from this date, there will not be above two thousand men, if that number, of the fixed established regiments on this side of Hudson River, to oppose Howe's whole army; and very little more on the other, to secure the eastern colonies, and the important passes leading through the Highlands to Albany, and the country about the lakes. In short, it is impossible for me, in the compass of a letter, to give you any idea of our situation, of my difficulties, and of the constant perplexities I meet with, derived from the unhappy policy of short enlistments, and delaying them too long. Last fall, or winter, before the army, which was then to be raised, was set about, I represented in clear and explicit terms the evils which would arise from short enlistments, the expense which must attend the raising an army every year, and the futility of such an army when raised; and if I had spoken with a prophetic spirit, I could not have foretold the evils with more accuracy than I did. All the year since, I have been pressing Congress to delay no time in engaging men upon such terms as would insure success, telling them that the longer it was delayed the more difficult it would prove. But the measure was not commenced until it was too late to be effected. * * * I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde motion of things; and I solemnly protest, that a pecuniary reward of twenty thousand pounds a year would not induce me to undergo what I do, and, after all, perhaps to lose my character: as it is impossible, under such a variety of distressing circumstances, to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation."

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

The Enemy cross the Hudson—Retreat of the Garrison from Fort Lee —The crossing of the Hackensack –Lee ordered to move to the west side of the River—Reed's letter to him—Second move of the Army beyond the Passaic—Assistance sought from various quarters— Correspondences and schemes of Lee—Heath stanch to his instructions—Anxiety of George Clinton for the safety of the Hudson— Critical situation of the Army—Disparaging correspondence between Lee and Reed—Washington retreats across the Raritan—Arrives at Trenton—Removes his baggage across the Delaware—Dismay and dispondency of the Country—Proclamation of Lord Howe—Exultation of the Enemy—Washington's resolve in case of extremity.

With the capture of Fort Washington the project of obstructing the navigation of the Hudson, at that point, was at an end. Fort Lee, consequently, became useless, and Washington ordered all the ammunition and stores to be removed, preparatory to its abandonment. This was effected with the whole of the ammunition, and a part of the stores, and every exertion was making to hurry off the remainder, when early in the morning of the 20th, intelligence was brought that the enemy, with two hundred boats, had crossed the river and landed a few miles above. General Greene immediately ordered the garrison under arms, sent out troops to hold the enemy in check, and sent off an express to Washington at Hackensack.

The enemy had crossed the Hudson, on a very rainy night, in two divisions; one diagonally upward from King's Bridge, landing on the west side, about eight o'clock; the other marched up the east bank, three or four miles, and then crossed to the opposite shore. The whole corps, six thousand strong, and under the command of Lord Cornwallis, were landed, with their cannon, by ten o'clock, at a place called Closter Dock, five or six miles above Fort Lee, and under that line of lofty and perpendicular cliffs known as the Palisades. "The seamen," says Sir William Howe, "distinguished themselves remarkably on this occasion, by their readiness to drag the cannon up a very narrow road, for nearly half a mile, to the top of a precipice, which bounds the shore for some miles on the west side."[1]

[1] Some writers have stated that Cornwallis crossed on the 18th. They have been misled by a letter of Sir William Howe, which gives

Washington arrived at the fort in three-quarters of an hour. Being told that the enemy were extending themselves across the country, he at once saw that they intended to form a line from the Hudson to the Hackensack, and hem the whole garrison in between the two rivers. Nothing would save it but a prompt retreat to secure the bridge over the Hackensack. No time was to be lost. The troops sent out to check the enemy were recalled. The retreat commenced in all haste. There was a want of horses and waggons; a great quantity of baggage, stores and provisions, therefore, was abandoned. So was all the artillery excepting two twelve-pounders. Even the tents were left standing, and camp-kettles on the fire. With all their speed they did not reach the Hackensack River before the vanguard of the enemy was close upon them. Expecting a brush, the greater part hurried over the bridge, others crossed at the ferry, and some higher up. The enemy, however, did not dispute the passage of the river; but Cornwallis stated in his despatches, that, had not the Americans been apprised of his approach, he would have surrounded them at the fort. Some of his troops that night occupied the tents they had abandoned.

From Hackensack Colonel Grayson, one of Washington's aide-de-camps, wrote instantly, by his orders, to General Lee; informing him that the enemy had crossed into the Jerseys, and, as was reported, *in great numbers*. "His Excellency," adds Grayson, "thinks it would be advisable in you to remove the troops under your command on this side of the North River, and there wait for further commands."

Washington himself wrote to Lee on the following day (Nov. 21st). "I am of opinion," said he, "and the gentlemen about me concur in it, that the public interest requires your coming over to this side of the Hudson with the Continental troops. * * * * The enemy is evidently changing the seat of war to this side of the North River, and the inhabitants of this country will expect the Continental army to give them what support they can; and failing in that, they will cease to depend upon, or sup-

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that date. Lord Howe, in a letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty, gives the date we have stated (the 20th), which is the true one.

port a force from which no protection is to be derived. It is therefore, of the utmost importance that at least an appearance of force should be made, to keep this province in connection with the others."

In this moment of hurry and agitation, Colonel Reed, also, Washington's *fidus Achates*, wrote to Lee, but in a tone and spirit that may surprise the reader, knowing the devotion he had hitherto manifested for the commander-in-chief. After expressing the common wish that Lee should be at the principal scene of action, he adds: "I do not mean to flatter or praise you at the expense of any other; but I do think it is entirely owing to you that this army, and the liberties of America, so far as they are dependent on it, are not entirely cut off. You have decision, a quality often wanting in minds otherwise valuable, and I ascribe to this our escape from York Island, King's Bridge, and the Plains; and I have no doubt, had you been here, the garrison of Mount Washington would now have composed a part of this army; and from all these circumstances, I confess I do ardently wish to see you removed from a place where there will be so little call for your judgment and experience, to the place where they are likely to be so necessary. Nor am I singular in my opinion; every gentleman of the family, the officers and soldiers generally, have a confidence in you. The enemy constantly inquire where you are, and seem to be less confident when you are present."

Then alluding to the late affair at Fort Washington, he continues: "General Washington's own judgment, seconded by representations from us, would, I believe, have saved the men and their arms; but, unluckily, General Greene's judgment was contrary. This kept the general's mind in a state of suspense, till the stroke was struck. Oh, general! An indecisive mind is one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall an army; how often have I lamented it this campaign! All circumstances considered, we are in a very awful and alarming situation; one that requires the utmost wisdom and firmness of mind. As soon as the season will admit, I think yourself and some others should go to Congress, and form the plan of the new army. * * * I must conclude, with my clear and

explicit opinion, that your presence is of the last importance."[1]

Well might Washington apprehend that his character and conduct, in the perplexities in which he was placed, would be liable to be misunderstood by the public when the friend of his bosom could so misjudge him.

Reed had evidently been dazzled by the daring spirit and unscrupulous policy of Lee, who, in carrying out his measures, heeded but little the counsels of others, or even the orders of government; Washington's respect for both, and the caution with which he hesitated in adopting measures in opposition to them, was stamped by the bold soldier and his admirers as indecision.

At Hackensack the army did not exceed three thousand men, and they were dispirited by ill success, and the loss of tents and baggage. They were without intrenching tools, in a flat country, where there were no natural fastnesses. Washington resolved, therefore, to avoid any attack from the enemy, though, by so doing, he must leave a fine and fertile region open to their ravages, or a plentiful storehouse, from which they would draw voluntary supplies. A second move was necessary, again, to avoid the danger of being enclosed between two rivers. Leaving three regiments, therefore, to guard the passes of the Hackensack, and serve as covering parties, he again decamped, and threw himself on the west bank of the Passaic, in the neighbourhood of Newark.

His army, small as it was, would soon be less. The term of enlistment of those under General Mercer, from the flying camp, was nearly expired; and it was not probable that, disheartened as they were by defeats and losses, exposed to inclement weather, and unaccustomed to military hardships, they would longer forego the comforts of their homes to drag out the residue of a ruinous campaign.

In addition, too, to the superiority of the force that was following him, the rivers gave the enemy facilities, by means of their shipping, to throw troops in his rear. In this extremity he cast about in every direction for assistance. Colonel Reed, on whom he relied as on a second

[1] Memoirs of Reed, i. 255.

self, was despatched to Burlington, with a letter to Governor William Livingston, describing his hazardous situation, and entreating him to call out a portion of the New Jersey militia; and General Mifflin was sent to Philadelphia to implore immediate aid from Congress and the local authorities.

His main reliance for prompt assistance, however, was upon Lee. On the 24th came a letter from that general, addressed to Colonel Reed. Washington opened it, as he was accustomed to do, in the absence of that officer, with letters addressed to him on the business of the army. Lee was at his old encampment at Northcastle. He had no means, he said, of crossing at Dobbs' Ferry, and the round by King's Ferry would be so great that he could not get there in time to answer any purpose. "I have, therefore," added he, "ordered General Heath, who is close to the only ferry which can be passed, to detach two thousand men, to apprise his Excellency, and await his further orders; a mode which, I flatter myself, will answer better what I conceive to be the spirit of the orders than should I move the corps from hence. Withdrawing our troops from hence would be attended with some very serious consequences, which at present would be tedious to enumerate; as to myself," adds he, "I hope to set out to-morrow."

A letter of the same date (November 23rd), from Lee to James Bowdoin, president of the Massachusetts council, may throw some light on his motives for delaying to obey the orders of the commander-in-chief. "Before the unfortunate affair of Fort Washington," writes he, "it was my opinion that the two armies—that on the east, and that on the west side of the North River—must rest each on its own bottom; that the idea of detaching and reinforcing from one side to the other, on every motion of the enemy, was chimerical; but to harbour such a thought in our present circumstances is absolute insanity. In this invasion, should the enemy alter the present direction of their operations, and attempt to open the passage of the Highlands, or enter New England, I should never entertain the thought of being succoured by the western army. I know it is impossible. We must, therefore, depend upon ourselves. To Connecticut and Massachusetts I shall look for

assistance. * * * I hope the cursed job of Fort Washington will occasion no dejection: the place itself was of no value. For my own part, I am persuaded that if we only act with common sense, spirit, and decision, the day must be our own."

In another letter to Bowdoin, dated on the following day, and enclosing an extract from Washington's letter of November 21st, he writes:—"Indecision bids fair for tumbling down the goodly fabric of American freedom, and, with it, the rights of mankind. 'Twas indecision of Congress prevented our having a noble army, and on an excellent footing. 'Twas indecision in our military councils which cost us the garrison of Fort Washington, the consequence of which must be fatal, unless remedied in time by a contrary spirit. Enclosed, I send you an extract of a letter from the general, on which you will make your comments; and I have no doubt you will concur with me in the necessity of raising immediately an army to save us from perdition. Affairs appear in so important a crisis, that I think the resolves of the Congress must no longer too nicely weigh with us. We must save the community, in spite of the ordinances of the legislature. There are times when we must commit treason against the laws of the State, for the salvation of the State. The present crisis demands this brave, virtuous kind of treason." He urges President Bowdoin, therefore, to waive all formalities, and not only complete the regiments prescribed to the province, but to add four companies to each regiment. "We must not only have a force sufficient to cover your province, and all these fertile districts, from the insults and irruptions of the tyrant's troops, but sufficient to drive 'em out of all their quarters in the Jerseys, or all is lost. * * * In the mean time, send up a formidable body of militia to supply the place of the Continental troops, which I am ordered to convey over the river. Let your people be well supplied with blankets and warm clothes, as I am determined, by the help of God, to unnest 'em, even in the dead of winter."[1]

It is evident Lee considered Washington's star to be on

[1] Am. Archives. 5th Series, iii. 811.

the decline, and his own in the ascendant. The "affair of Fort Washington," and the "indecision of the commander-in-chief," were apparently his watch-words.

On the following day (24th) he writes to Washington, from Northcastle, on the subject of removing troops across the Hudson. "I have received your orders, and shall endeavour to put them in execution, but question whether I shall be able to carry with me any considerable number; not so much from a want of zeal in the men as from their wretched condition with respect to shoes, stockings, and blankets, which the present bad weather renders more intolerable. I sent Heath orders to transport two thousand men across the river, apprise the general, and wait for further orders; but that great man (as I might have expected) intrenched himself within the letter of his instructions, and refused to part with a single file, though I undertook to replace them with a part of my own." He concludes by showing that, so far from hurrying to the support of his commander-in-chief, he was meditating a side blow of his own devising. "I should march this day with Glover's brigade, but have just received intelligence that Rogers' corps, a part of the light-horse, and another brigade lie in so exposed a situation, as to present to us the fairest opportunity of carrying them off. If we succeed it will have a great effect, and amply compensate for two days' delay."

Scarce had Lee sent this letter when he received one from Washington informing him that he had mistaken his views in regard to the troops required to cross the Hudson; it was his (Lee's) division that he wanted to have over. The force under Heath must remain to guard the posts and passes through the Highlands, the importance of which was so infinitely great that there should not be the least possible risk of losing them. In the same letter Washington, who presumed Lee was by this time at Peekskill, advised him to take every precaution to come by a safe route, and by all means to keep between the enemy and the mountains, as he understood they were taking measures to intercept his march.

Lee's reply was still from Northcastle. He explained that his idea of detaching troops from Heath's division was

merely for expedition's sake, intending to replace them from his own. The want of carriages and other causes had delayed him. From the force of the enemy remaining in Westchester County he did not conceive the number of them in the Jerseys to be near so great as Washington was taught to believe. He had been making a sweep of the country to clear it of the Tories. Part of his army had now moved on, and he would set out on the following day. He concluded with the assurance, "I shall take care to obey your Excellency's orders, in regard to my march, as exactly as possible."

On the same day he vents his spleen in a tart letter to Heath. "I perceive," writes he, "that you have formed an idea that should General Washington remove to the Straits of Magellan, the instructions he left with you upon a particular occasion have, to all intents and purposes, invested you with a command separate from, and independent of any other superiors. * * * * That General Heath is by no means to consider himself obliged to obey the second in command." He concluded by informing him that, as the commander-in-chief was now separated from them, he (Lee) commanded, of course, on this side of the water, and for the future *would*, and *must* be obeyed.

Before receiving this letter, Heath, doubtful whether Washington might not be pressed, and desirous of having his troops across the Hudson, had sent off an express to him for explicit instructions on that point, and, in the mean time, had kept them ready for a move.

General George Clinton, who was with him, and had the safety of the Hudson at heart, was in an agony of solicitude. "We have been under marching orders these three days past," writes he, "and only wait the directions of General Washington. Should they be to move, all's over with the river this season, and, I fear, for ever. General Lee, four or five days ago, had orders to move with his division across the river. Instead of so doing, he ordered General Heath to march his men through, and he would replace them with so many of his. General Heath could not do this consistent with his instructions, but put his men under marching orders to wait his Excellency's orders." Honest George Clinton was still perplexed and

annoyed by these marchings and counter-marchings, and especially with these incessant retreats. "A strange way of cooking business!" writes he. "We have no particular accounts yet from head-quarters, *but I am apt to believe retreating is yet fashionable.*"

The return of the express sent to Washington, relieved Clinton's anxiety about the Highlands; reiterating the original order, that the division under Heath should remain for the protection of the passes.

Washington was still at Newark when, on the 27th, he received Lee's letter of the 24th, speaking of his scheme of capturing Rogers the partisan. Under other circumstances it might have been a sufficient excuse for his delay, but higher interests were at stake; he immediately wrote to Lee as follows: "My former letters were so full and explicit, as to the necessity of your marching as early as possible, that it is unnecessary to add more on that head. I confess I expected you would have been sooner in motion. The force here, when joined by yours, will not be adequate to any great opposition; at present it is weak, and it has been more owing to the badness of the weather that the enemy's progress has been checked, than any resistance we could make. They are now pushing this way,—part of them have passed the Passaic. Their plan is not entirely unfolded, but I shall not be surprised if Philadelphia should turn out the object of their movement."

The situation of the little army was daily becoming more perilous. In a council of war, several of the members urged a move to Morristown, to form a junction with the troops expected from the Northern army. Washington, however, still cherished the idea of making a stand at Brunswick on the Raritan, or, at all events, of disputing the passage of the Delaware; and in this intrepid resolution he was warmly seconded by Greene.

Breaking up his camp once more, therefore, he continued his retreat towards New Brunswick; but so close was Cornwallis upon him, that his advance entered one end of Newark, just as the American rear-guard had left the other.

From Brunswick, Washington wrote on the 29th, to William Livingston, governor of the Jerseys, requesting him to have all boats and river craft, for seventy miles

along the Delaware, removed to the western bank out of the reach of the enemy, and put under guard. He was disappointed in his hope of making a stand on the banks of the Raritan. All the force he could muster at Brunswick, including the New Jersey militia, did not exceed four thousand men. Colonel Reed had failed in procuring aid from the New Jersey legislature. That body, shifting from place to place, was on the eve of dissolution. The term of the Maryland and New Jersey troops in the flying camp had expired. General Mercer endeavoured to detain them, representing the disgrace of turning their back upon the cause when the enemy was at hand: his remonstrances were fruitless. As to the Pennsylvania levies, they deserted in such numbers, that guards were stationed on the roads and ferries to intercept them.

At this moment of care and perplexity, a letter, forwarded by express, arrived at head-quarters. It was from General Lee, dated from his camp at Northcastle, to Colonel Reed, and was in reply to the letter written by that officer from Hackensack on the 21st, which we have already laid before the reader. Supposing that it related to official business, Washington opened it, and read as follows:—

"My dear Reed:—I received your most obliging, flattering letter; lament with you that fatal indecision of mind, which in war is a much greater disqualification than stupidity, or even want of personal courage. Accident may put a decisive blunderer in the right; but eternal defeat and miscarriage must attend the man of the best parts, if cursed with indecision. · The general recommends in so pressing a manner as almost to amount to an order, to bring over the Continental troops under my command, which recommendation, or order, throws me into the greatest dilemma from several considerations." After stating these considerations, he adds, "My reason for not having marched already is, that we have just received intelligence that Rogers' corps, the light-horse, part of the Highlanders, and another brigade, lie in so exposed a situation as to give the fairest opportunity of being carried. I should have attempted it last night, but the rain was too violent, and when our pieces are wet, you know our troops are *hors du combat*. This night I hope will be better. * * * * * * I

only wait myself for this business of Rogers and company being over. I shall then fly to you; for, to confess a truth, I really think our chief will do better with me than without me."

A glance over this letter sufficed to show Washington that, at this dark moment, when he most needed support and sympathy, his character and military conduct were the subject of disparaging comments, between the friend in whom he had so implicitly confided, and a sarcastic and apparently self-constituted rival. Whatever may have been his feelings of wounded pride, and outraged friendship, he restrained them, and enclosed the letter to Reed, with the following chilling note:—

"DEAR SIR:—The enclosed was put into my hands by an express from White Plains. Having no idea of its being a private letter, much less suspecting the tendency of the correspondence, I opened it; as I have done all other letters to you from the same place, and Peekskill, upon the business of your office, as I conceived, and found them to be. This, as it is the truth, must be my excuse for seeing the contents of a letter, which neither inclination nor intention would have prompted me to," &c., &c.

The very calmness and coldness of this note, must have had a greater effect upon Reed, than could have been produced by the most vehement reproaches. In subsequent communications, he endeavoured to explain away the offensive paragraphs in Lee's letter, declaring there was nothing in his own inconsistent with the respect and affection he had ever borne for Washington's person and character.

Fortunately for Reed, Washington never saw that letter. There were passages in it beyond the reach of softening explanation. As it was, the purport of it, as reflected in Lee's reply, had given him a sufficient shock. His magnanimous nature, however, was incapable of harbouring long resentments; especially in matters relating solely to himself. His personal respect for Colonel Reed continued; he invariably manifested a high sense of his merits, and consulted him, as before, on military affairs; but his hitherto affectionate confidence in him, as a sympathizing friend, had received an incurable wound. His letters, before so frequent, and such perfect outpourings of heart and mind,

became few and far between, and confined to matters of business.

It must have been consoling to Washington at this moment of bitterness, to receive the following letter (dated Nov. 27th) from William Livingston, the intelligent and patriotic governor of New Jersey. It showed that while many misjudged him, and friends seemed falling from his side, others appreciated him truly, and the ordeal he was undergoing.

"I can easily form some idea of the difficulties under which you labour," writes Livingston, "particularly of one for which the public can make no allowance, because your prudence, and fidelity to the cause, will not suffer you to reveal it to the public; an instance of magnanimity, superior perhaps to any that can be shown in battle. But depend upon it, my dear sir, the impartial world will do you ample justice before long. May God support you under that fatigue, both of body and mind, to which you must be constantly exposed."[1]

Washington lingered at Brunswick until the 1st of December, in the vain hope of being reinforced. The enemy, in the mean time, advanced through the country, impressing waggons and horses, and collecting cattle and sheep, as if for a distant march. At length their vanguard appeared on the opposite side of the Raritan. Washington immediately broke down the end of the bridge next the village, and after nightfall resumed his retreat. In the mean time, as the river was fordable, Captain Alexander Hamilton planted his field-pieces on high commanding ground, and opened a spirited fire, to check any attempt of the enemy to cross.

At Princeton, Washington left twelve hundred men, in

[1] We cannot dismiss this painful incident in Washington's life, without a prospective note on the subject. Reed was really of too generous and intelligent a nature not to be aware of the immense value of the friendship he had put at hazard. He grieved over his mistake, especially as after events showed more and more the majestic greatness of Washington's character. A letter in the following year, in which he sought to convince Washington of his sincere and devoted attachment, is really touching in its appeals. We are happy to add, that it appears to have been successful, and to have restored, in a great measure, their relations of friendly confidence.

two brigades, under Lord Stirling and General Adam Stephen, to cover the country, and watch the motions of the enemy. Stephen was the same officer that had served as a colonel under Washington in the French war, as second in command of the Virginia troops, and had charge of Fort Cumberland. In consideration of his courage and military capacity, he had, in 1764, been intrusted with the protection of the frontier. He had recently brought a detachment of Virginia troops to the army, and received from Congress, in September, the commission of brigadier-general.

The harassed army reached Trenton on the 2nd of December. Washington immediately proceeded to remove his baggage and stores across the Delaware. In his letters from this place to the President of Congress, he gives his reasons for his continued retreat. "Nothing but necessity obliged me to retire before the enemy, and leave so much of the Jerseys unprotected. Sorry am I to observe that the frequent calls upon the militia of this State, the want of exertion in the principal gentlemen of the country, and a fatal supineness and insensibility of danger, till it is too late to prevent an evil that was not only foreseen, but foretold, have been the causes of our late disgraces.

"If the militia of this State had stepped forth in season (and timely notice they had), we might have prevented the enemy's crossing the Hackensack. We might, with equal possibility of success, have made a stand at Brunswick on the Raritan. But as both these rivers were fordable in a variety of places, being knee-deep only, it required many men to guard the passes, and these we had not."

In excuse for the people of New Jersey, it may be observed, that they inhabited an open, agricultural country, where the sound of war had never been heard. Many of them looked upon the Revolution as rebellion; others thought it a ruined enterprise; the armies engaged in it had been defeated and broken up. They beheld the commander-in-chief retreating through their country, with a handful of men, weary, wayworn, dispirited; without tents, without clothing, many of them barefooted, exposed to wintry weather, and driven from post to post, by a well-clad, well-fed, triumphant force, tricked out in all the

glittering bravery of war. Could it be wondered at, that peaceful husbandmen, seing their quiet fields thus suddenly overrun by adverse hosts, and their very hearthstones threatened with outrage, should, instead of flying to arms, seek for the safety of their wives and little ones, and the protection of their humble means, from the desolation which too often marks the course even of friendly armies?

Lord Howe and his brother sought to profit by this dismay and despondency. A proclamation, dated 30th of November, commanded all persons in arms against His Majesty's government, to disband and return home, and all Congresses to desist from treasonable acts: offering a free pardon to all who should comply within fifty days.

Many who had been prominent in the cause hastened to take advantage of this proclamation. Those who had most property to lose were the first to submit. The middle ranks remained generally steadfast in this time of trial.[1]

The following extract of a letter from a field-officer in New York, dated December 2nd, to his friend in London, gives the British view of affairs. "The rebels continue flying before our army. Lord Cornwallis took the fort opposite Brunswick, plunged into Raritan river, and seized the town. Mr. Washington had orders from the Congress to rally and defend that post, but he sent them word he could not. He was seen retreating with two brigades to Trenton, where they talk of resisting; but such a panic has seized the rebels, that no part of the Jerseys will hold them, and I doubt whether Philadelphia itself will stop their career. The Congress have lost their authority. * * * * They are in such consternation that they know not what to do. The two Adamses are in New England; Franklin gone to France; Lynch has lost his senses; Rutledge has gone home disgusted; Dana is persecuting at Albany, and Jay 's in the country playing as bad a part; so that the fools have lost the assistance of the knaves. However, should they embrace the enclosed proclamation, they may yet escape the halter. * * * Honest David Matthew, the mayor, has made his escape from them, and arrived here this day."[2]

[1] Gordon's Hist. Am. War, ii. p. 129.
[2] Am. Arch. 5th Series, iii. 1037.

In this dark day of peril to the cause, and to himself, Washington remained firm and undaunted. In casting about for some stronghold where he might make a desperate stand for the liberties of his country, his thoughts reverted to the mountain regions of his early campaigns. General Mercer was at hand, who had shared his perils among these mountains, and his presence may have contributed to bring them to his mind. "What think you," said Washington, "if we should retreat to the back parts of Pennsylvania, would the Pennsylvanians support us?"

"If the lower counties give up, the back counties will do the same," was the discouraging reply.

"We must then retire to Augusta County, in Virginia," said Washington. "Numbers will repair to us for safety, and we will try a predatory war. If overpowered, we must cross the Alleganies."

Such was the indomitable spirit, rising under difficulties, and buoyant in the darkest moment, that kept our tempest-tost cause from foundering.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

Lee at Peekskill—Stanch adherence of Heath to Orders—Lee crosses the Hudson—Washington at Trenton—Lee at the Heels of the Enemy—His Speculations on Military Greatness—Forced March of Cornwallis—Washington crosses the Delaware—Putnam in command at Philadelphia—Baffling Letters of Lee—Hopes to reconquer the Jerseys—Gates on the March—Lee quartered at Baskingridge—Surprised and captured—Speculations on his conduct.

NOTWITHSTANDING the repeated and pressing orders and entreaties of the commander-in-chief, Lee did not reach Peekskill until the 30th of November. In a letter of that date to Washington, who had complained of his delay, he simply alleged difficulties, which he would explain *when both had leisure*. His scheme to entrap Rogers, the renegade, had failed; the old Indian hunter had been too much on the alert; he boasted, however, to have rendered more service by his delay than he would have done had he moved sooner. His forces were thereby augmented, so that he expected to enter the Jerseys with four thousand

firm and willing men, who would make *a very important diversion*.

"The day after to-morrow," added he, "we shall pass the river, when I should be glad to receive your instructions; but I could wish you would bind me as little as possible; not from any opinion, I do assure you, of my own parts, but from a persuasion that detached generals cannot have too great latitude, unless they are very incompetent indeed."

Lee had calculated upon meeting no further difficulty in obtaining men from Heath. He rode to that general's quarters in the evening, and was invited by him to alight and take tea. On entering the house, Lee took Heath aside, and alluding to his former refusal to supply troops as being inconsistent with the orders of the commander-in-chief, "in point of *law*," said he, "you are right, but in point of policy I think you are wrong. I am going into the Jerseys for the salvation of America; I wish to take with me a larger force than I now have, and request you to order two thousand of your men to march with me."

Heath answered that he could not spare that number. He was then asked to order one thousand, to which he replied that the business might be as well brought to a point at once—that not a single man should march from the post by *his* order. "Then," exclaimed Lee, "I will order them myself." "That makes a wide difference," rejoined Heath. "You are my senior, but I have received positive written instructions from him who is superior to us both, and I will not *myself* break those orders." In proof of his words, Heath produced the recent letter received from Washington, repeating his former orders that no troops should be removed from that post. Lee glanced over the letter. "The commander-in-chief is now at a distance, and does not know what is necessary here so well as I do." He asked a sight of the return-book of the division. It was brought by Major Huntington, the deputy adjutant-general. Lee ran his eye over it, and chose two regiments. "You will order them to march early to-morrow morning to join me," said he to the major. Heath, ruffling with the pride of military law, turned to the major with an air of authority. "Issue such orders at your

peril!" exclaimed he: then addressing Lee, "Sir," said he, "if you come to this post, and mean to issue orders here which will break the positive ones I have received, I pray you do it completely yourself, and through your own deputy adjutant-general who is present, and not draw me or any of my family in as partners in the guilt."

"It is right," said Lee; "Colonel Scammel, do you issue the order." It was done accordingly, but Heath's punctilious scruples were not yet satisfied. "I have one more request to make, sir," said he to Lee, "and that is, that you will be pleased to give me a certificate that you *exercise command* at this post, and order from it these regiments."

Lee hesitated to comply, but George Clinton, who was present, told him he could not refuse a request so reasonable. He accordingly wrote, "For the satisfaction of General Heath, and at his request, I do certify that I am commanding officer, at this present writing, in this post, and that I have, in that capacity, ordered Prescott's and Wyllis's regiments to march."

Heath's military punctilio was satisfied, and he smoothed his ruffled plumes. Early the next morning the regiments moved from their cantonments ready to embark, when Lee again rode up to his door. "Upon further consideration," said he, "I have concluded not to take the two regiments with me—you may order them to return to their former post."

"This conduct of General Lee," adds Heath, in his 'Memoirs,' "appeared not a little extraordinary, and one is almost at a loss to account for it. He had been a soldier from his youth, had a perfect knowledge of service in all its branches, but was rather obstinate in his temper, and could scarcely brook being crossed in anything in the line of his profession."[1]

It was not until the 4th of December that Lee crossed the Hudson and began a laggard march, though aware of the imminent peril of Washington and his army—how different from the celerity of his movements in his expedition to the South!

[1] The above scene is given almost literally from General Heath's Memoirs.

In the mean time Washington, who was at Trenton, had profited by a delay of the enemy at Brunswick, and removed most of the stores and baggage of the army across the Delaware; and, being reinforced by fifteen hundred of the Pennsylvania militia, procured by Mifflin, prepared to face about, and march back to Princetown with such of his troops as were fit for service, there to be governed by circumstances, and the movements of General Lee. Accordingly, on the 5th of December he sent about twelve hundred men in the advance, to reinforce Lord Stirling, and the next day set off himself with the residue.

"The general has gone forward to Princeton," writes Colonel Reed, "where there are about three thousand men, with which, I fear, he will not be able to make any stand."[1]

While on the march, Washington received a letter from Greene, who was at Princeton, informing him of a report that Lee was "at the heels of the enemy." "I should think," adds Greene, "he had better keep on the flanks than the rear, unless it were possible to concert an attack at the same instant of time in front and rear. * * * I think General Lee must be confined within the lines of some general plan, or else his operations will be independent of yours. His own troops, General St. Clair's, and the militia, must form a respectable army."

Lee had no idea of conforming to a general plan; he had an independent plan of his own, and was at that moment at Pompton, indulging speculations on military greatness, and the lamentable want of it in his American contemporaries. In a letter from that place to Governor Cooke of Rhode Island, he imparts his notions on the subject. "Theory joined to practice, or a heaven-born genius, can alone constitute a general. As to the latter, God Almighty indulges the modern world very rarely with the spectacle; and I do not know, from what I have seen, that he has been more profuse of this ethereal spirit to the Americans, than to other nations."

While Lee was thus loitering and speculating, Cornwallis, knowing how far he was in the rear, and how weak

[1] Reed to the President of Congress.

was the situation of Washington's army, and being himself strongly reinforced, made a forced march from Brunswick, and was within two miles of Princeton. Stirling, to avoid being surrounded, immediately set out with two brigades for Trenton. Washington, too, receiving intelligence by express of these movements, hastened back to that place, and caused boats to be collected from all quarters, and the stores and troops transported across the Delaware. He himself crossed with the rear-guard on Sunday morning, and took up his quarters about a mile from the river; causing the boats to be destroyed, and troops to be posted opposite the fords. He was conscious, however, as he said, that with his small force he could make no great opposition, should the enemy bring boats with them. Fortunately they did not come thus provided.

The rear-guard, says an American account, had barely crossed the river, when Lord Cornwallis "came marching down with all the pomp of war, in great expectation of getting boats, and immediately pursuing. Not one was to be had there or elsewhere; for Washington had caused the boats, for an extent of seventy miles up and down the river, to be secured on the right bank. His lordship was effectually brought to a stand. He made some moves with two columns, as if he would cross the Delaware above and below, either to push on to Philadelphia, or to entrap Washington in the acute angle made by the bend of the river opposite Bordentown. An able disposition of American troops along the upper part of the river, and of a number of galleys below, discouraged any attempt of the kind. Cornwallis, therefore, gave up the pursuit, distributed the German troops in cantonments along the left bank of the river, and stationed his main force at Brunswick, trusting to be able before long to cross the Delaware on the ice.

On the 8th, Washington wrote to the President of Congress: "There is not a moment's time to be lost in assembling such a force as can be collected, as the object of the enemy cannot now be doubted in the smallest degree. Indeed, I shall be out in my conjecture, for it is only conjecture, if the late embarkation at New York is not for Delaware River, to co-operate with the army under

General Howe, who, I am informed from good authority, is with the British troops and his whole force upon this route. I have no certain intelligence of General Lee, although I have sent expresses to him, and lately a Colonel Humpton, to bring me some accurate accounts of his situation. I last night despatched another gentleman to him (Major Hoops), desiring he would hasten his march to the Delaware, on which I would provide boats near a place called Alexandria, for the transportation of his troops. I cannot account for the slowness of his march."

In further letters to Lee, Washington urged the peril of Philadelphia. "Do come on," writes he; "your arrival may be fortunate, and, if it can be effected without delay, it may be the means of preserving a city, whose loss must prove of the most fatal consequence to the cause of America."

Putnam was now detached to take command of Philadelphia, and put it in a state of defence, and General Mifflin to have charge of the munitions of war deposited there. By their advice Congress hastily adjourned on the 12th of December, to meet again on the 20th, at Baltimore.

Washington's whole force at this time, was about five thousand five hundred men; one thousand of them Jersey militia; fifteen hundred militia from Philadelphia, and a battalion of five hundred of the German yeomanry of Pennsylvania. Gates, however, he was informed, was coming on with seven regiments detached by Schuyler from the Northern department; reinforced by these, and the troops under Lee, he hoped to be able to attempt a stroke upon the enemy's forces, which lay a good deal scattered, and to all appearances, in a state of security. "A lucky blow in this quarter," writes he, "would be fatal to them, and would most certainly raise the spirits of the people, which are quite sunk by our late misfortunes."[1]

While cheering himself with these hopes, and trusting to speedy aid from Lee, that wayward commander, though nearly three weeks had elapsed since he had received

[1] Washington to Gov. Trumbull, 14th Dec.

Washington's orders and entreaties to join him with all possible despatch, was no farther on his march than Morristown, in the Jerseys; where, with militia recruits, his force was about four thousand men. In a letter written by him on the 8th of December, to a committee of Congress, he says: "If I was not taught to think the army with General Washington had been considerably reinforced, I should immediately join him; but as I am assured he is very strong, I should imagine we can make a better impression by beating up and harassing their detached parties in their rear, for which purpose, a good post at Chatham seems the best calculated. It is at a happy distance from Newark, Elizabethtown, Woodbridge, and Boundbrook. We shall, I expect, annoy, distract, and consequently weaken them in a desultory war."[1]

On the same day he writes from Chatham, in reply to Washington's letter by Major Hoops, just received: "I am extremely shocked to hear that your force is so inadequate to the necessity of your situation, as I had been taught to think you had been considerably reinforced. Your last letters proposing a plan of surprises and forced marches, convinced me that there was no danger of your being obliged to pass the Delaware; in consequence of which proposals, I have put myself in a position the most convenient to co-operate with you by attacking their rear. I cannot persuade myself that Philadelphia is their object at present. * * * It will be difficult, I am afraid, to join you; but cannot I do you more service by attacking their rear?"

This letter, sent by a light-horseman, received an instant reply from Washington. "Philadelphia, beyond all question, is the object of the enemy's movements, and nothing less than our utmost exertions will prevent General Howe from possessing it. The force I have is weak, and utterly incompetent to that end. I must, therefore, entreat you to push on with every possible succour you can bring."[2]

On the 9th, Lee, who was at Chatham, receives information from Heath, that three of the regiments detached under Gates from the Northern army, had arrived from

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, iii. 1121.
[2] Ibid., 1138.

Albany at Peekskill. He instantly writes to him to forward them, without loss of time, to Morristown: "I am in hopes," adds he, "to reconquer (if I may so express myself) the Jerseys. It was really in the hands of the enemy before my arrival."

On the 11th, Lee writes to Washington from Morristown, where he says his troops had been obliged to halt two days for want of shoes. He now talked of crossing the great Brunswick post-road, and, by a forced night's march, making his way to the ferry above Burlington, where boats should be sent up from Philadelphia to receive him.

"I am much surprised," writes Washington in reply, "that you should be in any doubt respecting the route you should take, after the information you have received upon that head. A large number of boats was procured, and is still retained at Tinicum, under a strong guard, to facilitate your passage across the Delaware. I have so frequently mentioned our situation, and the necessity of your aid, that it is painful for me to add a word on the subject. * * * Congress have directed Philadelphia to be defended to the last extremity. The fatal consequences that must attend its loss, are but too obvious to every one; your arrival may be the means of saving it."

In detailing the close of General Lee's march, so extraordinary for its tardiness, we shall avail ourselves of the memoir already cited of General Wilkinson, who was at that time a brigade major, about twenty two years of age, and was accompanying General Gates, who had been detached by Schuyler with seven regiments to reinforce Washington. Three of these regiments, as we have shown, had descended the Hudson to Peekskill, and were ordered by Lee to Morristown. Gates had embarked with the remaining four, and landed with them at Esopus, whence he took a back route by the Delaware and the Minisink.

On the 11th of December he was detained by a heavy snow storm, in a sequestered valley near the Wallpeck in New Jersey. Being cut off from all information respecting the adverse armies, he detached Major Wilkinson to seek Washington's camp, with a letter, stating the force under his command, and inquiring what route he should take. Wilkinson crossed the hills on horseback to Sussex court-

house, took a guide, and proceeded down the country. Washington, he soon learnt, had passed the Delaware several days before; the boats, he was told, had been removed from the ferries, so that he would find some difficulty in getting over, but Major-general Lee was at Morristown. Finding such obstacles in his way to the commander-in-chief, he determined to seek the second in command and ask orders from him for General Gates. Lee had decamped from Morristown on the 12th of December, but had marched no further than Vealtown, barely eight miles distant. There he left General Sullivan with the troops, while he took up his quarters three miles off, at a tavern, at Baskingridge. As there was not a British cantonment within twenty miles, he took but a small guard for his protection, thinking himself perfectly secure.

About four o'clock in the morning, Wilkinson arrived at his quarters. He was presented to the general as he lay in bed, and delivered into his hands the letter of General Gates. Lee, observing it was addressed to Washington, declined opening it, until apprised by Wilkinson of its contents, and the motives of his visit. He then broke the seal, and recommended Wilkinson to take repose. The latter lay down on his blanket, before a comfortable fire, among the officers of his suite; "for we were not encumbered in those days," says he, "with beds or baggage."

Lee, naturally indolent, lingered in bed until eight o'clock. He then came down in his usual slovenly style, half-dressed, in slippers and blanket coat, his collar open, and his linen apparently of some days' wear. After some inquiries about the campaign in the North, he gave Wilkinson a brief account of the operations of the main army, which he condemned in strong terms, and in his usual sarcastic way. He wasted the morning in altercation with some of the militia, particularly the Connecticut light-horse; "several of whom," says Wilkinson, "appeared in large, full-bottomed perukes, and were treated very irreverently. One wanted forage, another his horse shod, another his pay, a fourth provisions, &c.; to which the general replied, 'Your wants are numerous; but you have not mentioned the last,—you want to go home, and shall be indulged; for d— you, you do no good here.'"

Colonel Scammel, the adjutant-general, called from General Sullivan for orders concerning the morning's march. After musing a moment or two, Lee asked him if he had a manuscript map of the country. It was produced, and spread upon a table. Wilkinson observed Lee trace with his finger the route from Vealtown to Pluckamin, thence to Somerset court-house, and on, by Rocky Hill, to Princeton; he then returned to Pluckamin, and traced the route in the same manner by Boundbrook to Brunswick, and after a close inspection carelessly said to Scammel, "Tell General Sullivan to move down toward Pluckamin; that I will soon be with him." This, observes Wilkinson, was off his route to Alexandria on the Delaware, where he had been ordered to cross, and directly on that towards Brunswick and Princeton. He was convinced, therefore, that Lee meditated an attack on the British post at the latter place.

From these various delays they did not sit down to breakfast before ten o'clock. After breakfast Lee sat writing a reply to General Gates, in which, as usual, he indulged in sarcastic comments on the commander-in-chief. "The ingenious manœuvre of Fort Washington," writes he, "has completely unhinged the goodly fabric we had been building. There never was so d—d a stroke; *entre nous*, a certain great man is most damnably deficient. He has thrown me into a situation where I have my choice of difficulties: if I stay in this province I risk myself and army; and if I do not stay, the province is lost for ever. * * * * * As to what relates to yourself, if you think you can be in time to aid the general, I would have you by all means go; you will at least save your army," &c.[1]

While Lee was writing, Wilkinson was looking out of a window down a lane, about a hundred yards in length, leading from the house to the main road. Suddenly a party of British dragoons turned a corner of the avenue at a full charge. "Here, sir, are the British cavalry!" exclaimed Wilkinson. "Where?" replied Lee, who had just signed his letter. "Around the house!"—for they had

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, iii. 1201.

opened file and surrounded it. "Where is the guard? d—— the guard, why don't they fire?" Then after a momentary pause—"Do, sir, see what has become of the guard."

The guards, alas! unwary as their general, and chilled by the air of a frosty morning, had stacked their arms, and repaired to the south side of a house on the opposite side of the road to sun themselves, and were now chased by the dragoons in different directions. In fact, a Tory, who had visited the general the evening before, to complain of the loss of a horse taken by the army, having found where Lee was to lodge and breakfast, had ridden eighteen miles in the night to Brunswick and given the information, and had piloted back Colonel Harcourt with his dragoons."[1]

The women of the house would fain have concealed Lee in a bed, but he rejected the proposition with disdain. Wilkinson, according to his own account, posted himself in a place where only one person could approach at a time, and there took his stand, a pistol in each hand, resolved to shoot the first and second assailant, and then appeal to his sword. While in this "unpleasant situation," as he terms it, he heard a voice declare, "If the general does not surrender in five minutes, I will set fire to the house!" After a short pause the threat was repeated, with a solemn oath. Within two minutes he heard it proclaimed, "Here is the general; he has surrendered."

There was a shout of triumph, but a great hurry to make sure of the prize before the army should arrive to the rescue. A trumpet sounded the recall to the dragoons, who were chasing the scattered guards. The general, bareheaded, and in his slippers and blanket coat, was mounted on Wilkinson's horse, which stood at the door, and the troop clattered off with their prisoner to Brunswick. In three hours the booming of cannon in that direction told the exultation of the enemy.[2] They boasted of having taken the American palladium; for they considered Lee the most scientific and experienced of the rebel generals.

On the departure of the troops, Wilkinson, finding the coast clear, ventured from his stronghold, repaired to the

[1] Jos. Trumbull to Gov. Trumbull.—*Am. Archives, 5th Series,* iii. 1265.

[2] Idem.

stable, mounted the first horse he could find, and rode full speed in quest of General Sullivan, whom he found under march toward Pluckamin. He handed him the letter to Gates, written by Lee the moment before his capture, and still open. Sullivan having read it, returned it to Wilkinson, and advised him to rejoin General Gates without delay: for his own part, being now in command, he changed his route, and pressed forward to join the commander-in-chief.

The loss of Lee was a severe shock to the Americans, many of whom, as we have shown, looked to him as the man who was to rescue them from their critical, and well-nigh desperate situation. With their regrets, however, were mingled painful doubts, caused by his delay in obeying the repeated summons of his commander-in-chief, when the latter was in peril; and by his exposing himself so unguardedly in the very neighbourhood of the enemy. Some at first suspected that he had done so designedly, and with collusion; but this was soon disproved by the indignities attending his capture, and his rigorous treatment subsequently by the British, who affected to consider him a deserter, from his having formerly served in their army.

Wilkinson, who was at that time conversant with the cabals of the camp, and apparently in the confidence of some of the leaders, points out what he considers the true secret of Lee's conduct. His military reputation, originally very high, had been enhanced of late, by its being generally known that he had been opposed to the occupation of Fort Washington; while the fall of that fortress and other misfortunes of the campaign, though beyond the control of the commander-in-chief, had quickened the discontents which, according to Wilkinson, had been generated against him at Cambridge, and raised a party against him in Congress. "It was confidently asserted at the time," adds he, "but is not worthy of credit, that a motion had been made in that body tending to supersede him in the command of the army. In this temper of the times, if General Lee had anticipated General Washington in cutting the cordon of the enemy between New York and the Delaware, the commander-in-chief would probably have been superseded. In this case, Lee would have succeeded him."

What an unfortunate change would it have been for the

country! Lee was undoubtedly a man of brilliant talents, shrewd sagacity, and much knowledge and experience in the art of war; but he was wilful and uncertain in his temper, self-indulgent in his habits, and an egotist in warfare; boldly dashing for a soldier's glory rather than warily acting for a country's good. He wanted those great moral qualities which, in addition to military capacity, inspired such universal confidence in the wisdom, rectitude, and patriotism of Washington, enabling him to direct and control legislative bodies as well as armies; to harmonize the jarring passions and jealousies of a wide and imperfect confederacy, and to cope with the varied exigencies of the Revolution.

The very retreat which Washington had just effected through the Jerseys bore evidence to his generalship. Thomas Paine, who had accompanied the army "from Fort Lee to the edge of Pennsylvania," thus speaks in one of his writings published at the time: "With a handful of men we sustained an orderly retreat for near a hundred miles, brought off our ammunition, all our field-pieces, the greatest part of our stores, and had four rivers to pass. None can say that our retreat was precipitate, for we were three weeks in performing it, that the country might have time to come in. Twice we marched back to meet the enemy, and remained out until dark. The sign of fear was not seen in our camp; and had not some of the cowardly and disaffected inhabitants spread false alarms through the country, the Jerseys had never been ravaged."

And this is his testimony to the moral qualities of the commander-in-chief, as evinced in this time of perils and hardships. "Voltaire has remarked, that King William never appeared to full advantage but in difficulties and in action. The same remark may be made of General Washington, for the character fits him. There is a natural firmness in some minds, which cannot be unlocked by trifles; but which, when unlocked, discovers a cabinet of fortitude; and I reckon it among those kinds of public blessings which we do not immediately see, that God hath blessed him with uninterrupted health, and given him a mind that can even flourish upon care."[1]

[1] American Crisis, No. 1.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

Washington clothed with additional powers—Recruitment of the Army—Increased Pay—Colonel John Cadwalader—Arrival of Sullivan—Gates—Wilkinson—A Coup-de-Main meditated—Posture of Affairs at Trenton—Gates declines to take a part—His comments on Washington's plans—Preparations for the Coup-de-Main—Crossing of the Delaware—Attack on the Enemy's Forces at Trenton—Death of Rahl—His Character.

"BEFORE you receive this letter," writes Washington to his brother Augustine, "you will undoubtedly have heard of the captivity of General Lee. This is an additional misfortune; and the more vexatious, as it was by his own folly and imprudence, and without a view to effect any good that he was taken. As he went to lodge three miles out of his own camp, and within twenty miles of the enemy, a rascally Tory rode in the night to give notice of it to the enemy, who sent a party of light-horse that seized him, and carried him off with every mark of triumph and indignity."

This is the severest comment that the magnanimous spirit of Washington permitted him to make on the conduct and fortunes of the man who would have supplanted him; and this is made in his private correspondence with his brother. No harsh strictures on them appear in his official letters to Congress or the Board of War; nothing but regret for his capture, as a loss to the service.

In the same letter he speaks of the critical state of affairs: "If every nerve is not strained to recruit the army with all possible expedition, I think the game is pretty nearly up. * * * You can form no idea of the perplexity of my situation. No man, I believe, ever had a greater choice of evils, and less means to extricate himself from them. However, under a full persuasion of the justice of our cause, I cannot entertain an idea that it will finally sink, though it may remain for some time under a cloud."

Fortunately, Congress, prior to their adjournment, had resolved that "until they should otherwise order, General Washington should be possessed of all power to order and

direct all things relative to the department and to the operations of war." Thus empowered, he proceeded immediately to recruit three battalions of artillery. To those whose terms were expiring, he promised an augmentation of twenty-five per cent. upon their pay, and a bounty of ten dollars to the men for six weeks' service. "It was no time," he said, "to stand upon expense; nor in matters of self-evident exigency, to refer to Congress at the distance of a hundred and thirty or forty miles." "If any good officers will offer to raise men upon continental pay and establishment in this quarter, I shall encourage them to do so, and regiment them when they have done it. It may be thought that I am going a good deal out of the line of my duty, to adopt these measures, or to advise thus freely. A character to lose, an estate to forfeit, the inestimable blessings of liberty at stake, and a life devoted, must be my excuse." [1]

The promise of increased pay and bounties had kept together for a time the dissolving army. The local militia began to turn out freely. Colonel John Cadwalader, a gentleman of gallant spirit, and cultivated mind and manners, brought a large volunteer detachment, well equipped, and composed principally of Philadelphia troops. Washington, who held Cadwalader in high esteem, assigned him an important station at Bristol, with Colonel Reed, who was his intimate friend, as an associate. They had it in charge to keep a watchful eye upon Count Donop's Hessians, who were cantoned along the opposite shore from Bordentown to the Black Horse.

On the 20th of December arrived General Sullivan in camp, with the troops recently commanded by the unlucky Lee. They were in a miserable plight; destitute of almost everything; many of them fit only for the hospital, and those whose terms were nearly out thinking of nothing but their discharge. About four hundred of them, who were Rhode Islanders, were sent down under Colonel Hitchcock, to reinforce Cadwalader; who was now styled brigadier-general by courtesy, lest the Continental troops might object to act under his command.

[1] Letter to the President of Congress.

On the same day arrived General Gates, with the remnants of four regiments from the Northern army. With him came Wilkinson, who now resumed his station as brigade-major in St. Clair's brigade, to which he belonged. To his Memoirs we are indebted for notices of the commander-in-chief. "When the divisions of Sullivan and Gates joined General Washington," writes Wilkinson, "he found his numbers increased, yet his difficulties were not sensibly diminished; ten days would disband his corps, and leave him 1,400 men, miserably provided in all things. I saw him in that gloomy period; dined with him, and attentively marked his aspect; always grave and thoughtful, he appeared at that time pensive and solemn in the extreme."

There were vivid schemes forming under that solemn aspect. The time seemed now propitious for the *coup-de-main* which Washington had of late been meditating. Everything showed careless confidence on the part of the enemy. Howe was in winter quarters at New York. His troops were loosely cantoned about the Jerseys, from the Delaware to Brunswick, so that they could not readily be brought to act in concert on a sudden alarm. The Hessians were in the advance, stationed along the Delaware, facing the American lines, which were along the west bank. Cornwallis, thinking his work accomplished, had obtained leave of absence, and was likewise at New York, preparing to embark for England. Washington had now between five and six thousand men fit for service; with these he meditated to cross the river at night, at different points, and make simultaneous attacks upon the Hessian advance posts.

He calculated upon the eager support of his troops, who were burning to revenge the outrages on their homes and families, committed by these foreign mercenaries. They considered the Hessians mere hirelings; slaves to a petty despot, fighting for sordid pay, and actuated by no sentiment of patriotism or honour. They had rendered themselves the horror of the Jerseys, by rapine, brutality, and heartlessness. At first, their military discipline had inspired awe, but of late they had become careless and unguarded, knowing the broken and dispirited state of the

Americans, and considering them incapable of any offensive enterprise.

A brigade of three Hessian regiments, those of Rahl,[1] Lossberg, and Knyphausen, was stationed at Trenton. Colonel Rahl had the command of the post at his own solicitation, and in consequence of the laurels he had gained at White Plains and Fort Washington. We have before us journals of two Hessian lieutenants and a corporal, which give graphic particulars of the colonel and his post. According to their representations, he, with all his bravery, was little fitted for such an important command. He lacked the necessary vigilance and forecast.

One of the lieutenants speaks of him in a sarcastic vein, and evidently with some degree of prejudice. According to his account, there was more bustle than business at the post. The men were harassed with watches, detachments and pickets, without purpose and without end. The cannon must be drawn forth every day from their proper places, and paraded about the town, seemingly only to make a stir and uproar.

The lieutenant was especially annoyed by the colonel's passion for music. Whether his men when off duty were well or ill clad, whether they kept their muskets clean and bright, and their ammunition in good order, was of little moment to the colonel, he never inquired about it;—but the music! that was the thing! the hautboys—he never could have enough of them. The main guard was at no great distance from his quarters, and the music could not linger there long enough. There was a church close by, surrounded by palings; the officer on guard must march round and round it, with his men and musicians, looking, says the lieutenant, like a Catholic procession, wanting only the cross and the banner, and chanting choristers.

According to the same authority, Rahl was a boon companion; made merry until a late hour in the night, and lay in bed until nine o'clock in the morning. When the officers came to parade between ten and eleven o'clock,

[1] Seldom has a name of so few letters been spelled so many ways as that of this commander. We find it written Rall in the military journals before us; yet we adhere to the one hitherto adopted by us, apparently on good authority.

and presented themselves at head-quarters, he was often in his bath, and the guard must be kept waiting half an hour longer. On parade, too, when any other commander would take occasion to talk with his staff officers and others upon duty about the concerns of the garrison, the colonel attended to nothing but the music—he was wrapped up in it, to the great disgust of the testy lieutenant.

And then, according to the latter, he took no precautions against the possibility of being attacked. A veteran officer, Major Von Dechow, proposed that some works should be thrown up, where the cannon might be placed, ready against any assault. "Works!—pooh—pooh:"—the colonel made merry with the very idea—using an unseemly jest, which we forbear to quote. "An assault by the rebels! Let them come! We'll at them with the bayonet."

The veteran Dechow gravely persisted in his counsel. "Herr Colonel," said he, respectfully, "it costs almost nothing; if it does not help, it does not harm." The pragmatical lieuteuant, too, joined in the advice, and offered to undertake the work. The jovial colonel only repeated his joke, went away laughing at them both, and no works were thrown up.

The lieutenant, sorely nettled, observes sneeringly: "He believed the name of Rahl more fearful and redoubtable than all the works of Vauban and Cohorn, and that no rebel would dare to encounter it. A fit man truly to command a corps! and still more to defend a place lying so near an enemy having a hundred times his advantages. Everything with him was done heedlessly and without forecast."[1]

Such is the account given of this brave, but inconsiderate and light-hearted commander; given, however, by an officer not of his regiment. The honest corporal already mentioned, who was one of Rahl's own men, does him more justice. According to his journal, rumours that the Americans meditated an attack had aroused the vigilance of the colonel, and on the 21st of December he had reconnoitred the banks of the Delaware, with a strong detachment, quite to Frankfort, to see if there were any movements of the Americans indicative of an intention to cross the river. He had returned without seeing any; but had since caused

[1] Tagebuch eines Hessischen officiers.—MS.

pickets and alarm-posts to be stationed every night outside of the town.[1]

Such was the posture of affairs at Trenton at the time the *coup-de-main* was meditated.

Whatever was to be done, however, must be done quickly, before the river was frozen. An intercepted letter had convinced Washington of what he had before suspected, that Howe was only waiting for that event to resume active operations, cross the river on the ice, and push on triumphantly to Philadelphia.

He communicated his project to Gates, and wished him to go to Bristol, take command there, and co-operate from that quarter. Gates, however, pleaded ill-health, and requested leave to proceed to Philadelphia.

The request may have surprised Washington, considering the spirited enterprise that was on foot; but Gates, as has before been observed, had a disinclination to serve immediately under the commander-in-chief; like Lee, he had a disparaging opinion of him, or rather an impatience of his supremacy. He had, moreover, an ulterior object in view. Having been disappointed and chagrined in finding himself subordinate to General Schuyler in the Northern campaign, he was now intent on making interest among the members of Congress for an independent command. Washington urged that, on his way to Philadelphia, he would at least stop for a day or two at Bristol, to concert a plan of operations with Reed and Cadwalader, and adjust any little questions of etiquette and command that might arise between the continental colonels who had gone thither with Lee's troops, and the volunteer officers stationed there.[2]

He does not appear to have complied even with this request. According to Wilkinson's account, he took quarters at Newtown, and set out thence for Baltimore on the 24th of December, the very day before that of the intended *coup-de-main*. He prevailed on Wilkinson to accompany him as far as Philadelphia. On the road he appeared to be much depressed in spirits; but he relieved himself, like Lee, by criticising the plans of the commander-in-chief. "He frequently," writes Wilkinson, "expressed the

[1] Tagebuch des corporals Johannes Reuber.—MS.

[2] Washington to Gates. Gates's papers.

opinion that, while Washington was watching the enemy above Trenton, they would construct bateaux, pass the Delaware in his rear, and take possession of Philadelphia before he was aware; and that, instead of vainly attempting to stop Sir William Howe at the Delaware, General Washington ought to retire to the south of the Susquehanna, and there form an army. *He said it was his intention to propose this measure to Congress at Baltimore*, and urged me to accompany him to that place; but my duty forbade the thought."

Here we have somewhat of a counterpart to Lee's project of eclipsing the commander-in-chief. Evidently the two military veterans who had once been in conclave with him at Mount Vernon, considered the truncheon of command falling from his grasp.

The projected attack upon the Hessian posts was to be threefold.

1st. Washington was to cross the Delaware with a considerable force, at McKonkey's Ferry (now Taylorsville), about nine miles above Trenton, and march down upon that place, where Rahl's cantonment comprised a brigade of fifteen hundred Hessians, a troop of British light-horse, and a number of chasseurs.

2nd. General Ewing, with a body of Pennsylvania militia, was to cross at a ferry about a mile below Trenton; secure the bridge over the Assunpink creek, a stream flowing along the south side of the town, and cut off any retreat of the enemy in that direction.

3rd. General Putnam, with the troops occupied in fortifying Philadelphia, and those under General Cadwalader, was to cross below Burlington, and attack the lower posts under Count Donop. The several divisions were to cross the Delaware at night, so as to be ready for simultaneous action, by five o'clock in the morning.

Seldom is a combined plan carried into full operation. Symptoms of an insurrection in Philadelphia, obliged Putnam to remain with some force in that city; but he detached five or six hundred of the Pennsylvania militia under Colonel Griffin, his adjutant-general, who threw himself into the Jerseys, to be at hand to co-operate with Cadwalader.

A letter from Washington to Colonel Reed, who was stationed with Cadwalader, shows the anxiety of his mind, and his consciousness of the peril of the enterprise.

"Christmas day at night, one hour before day, is the time fixed upon for our attempt upon Trenton. For Heaven's sake keep this to yourself, as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us; our numbers, I am sorry to say, being less than I had any conception of; yet nothing but necessity, dire necessity, will, nay must, justify an attack. Prepare, and in concert with Griffin, attack as many of their posts as you possibly can, with a prospect of success; the more we can attack at the same instant, the more confusion we shall spread, and the greater good will result from it. * * * I have ordered our men to be provided with three days' provision ready cooked, with which, and their blankets, they are to march; for if we are successful, which Heaven grant, and the circumstances favour, we may push on. I shall direct every ferry and ford to be well guarded, and not a soul suffered to pass without an officer's going down with the permit. Do the same with you."

It has been said that Christmas night was fixed upon for the enterprise, because the Germans are prone to revel and carouse on that festival, and it was supposed a great part of the troops would be intoxicated, and in a state of disorder and confusion; but in truth Washington would have chosen an earlier day, had it been in his power. "We could not ripen matters for the attack before the time mentioned," said he in his letter to Reed, "so much out of sorts, and so much in want of everything are the troops under Sullivan."

Early on the eventful evening (Dec. 25th), the troops destined for Washington's part of the attack, about two thousand four hundred strong, with a train of twenty small pieces, were paraded near McKonkey's Ferry, ready to pass as soon as it grew dark, in the hope of being all on the other side by twelve o'clock. Washington repaired to the ground, accompanied by Generals Greene, Sullivan, Mercer, Stephen, and Lord Stirling. Greene was full of ardour for the enterprise; eager, no doubt, to wipe out the recollection of Fort Washington. It was, indeed, an anxious moment for all.

We have here some circumstances furnished to us by the Memoirs of Wilkinson. That officer had returned from Philadelphia, and brought a letter from Gates to Washington. There was some snow on the ground, and he had traced the march of the troops for the last few miles by the blood from the feet of those whose shoes were broken. Being directed to Washington's quarters, he found him, he says, alone, with his whip in his hand, prepared to mount his horse. "When I presented the letter of General Gates to him, before receiving it, he exclaimed with solemnity,—'What a time is this to hand me letters!' I answered that I had been charged with it by General Gates. 'By General Gates! Where is he?' 'I left him this morning in Philadelphia.' 'What was he doing there?' 'I understood him that he was on his way to Congress.' He earnestly repeated, 'On his way to Congress!' then broke the seal, and I made my bow, and joined General St. Clair on the bank of the river."

Did Washington surmise the incipient intrigues and cabals, that were already aiming to undermine him? Had Gates's eagerness to push on to Congress, instead of remaining with the army in a moment of daring enterprise, suggested any doubts as to his object? Perhaps not. Washington's nature was too noble to be suspicious; and yet he had received sufficient cause to be distrustful.

Boats being in readiness, the troops began to cross about sunset. The weather was intensely cold; the wind was high, the current strong, and the river full of floating ice. Colonel Glover, with his amphibious regiment of Marblehead fishermen, was in the advance; the same who had navigated the army across the Sound, in its retreat from Brooklyn on Long Island, to New York. They were men accustomed to battle with the elements, yet with all their skill and experience, the crossing was difficult and perilous. Washington, who had crossed with the troops, stood anxiously, yet patiently, on the eastern bank, while one precious hour after another elapsed, until the transportation of the artillery should be effected. The night was dark and tempestuous, the drifting ice drove the boats out of their course, and threatened them with destruction. Colo-

nel Knox, who attended to the crossing of the artillery, assisted with his labours, but still more with his "stentorian lungs," giving orders and directions.

It was three o'clock before the artillery was landed, and nearly four before the troops took up their line of march. Trenton was nine miles distant, and not to be reached before daylight. To surprise it, therefore, was out of the question. There was no making a retreat without being discovered, and harassed in repassing the river. Beside, the troops from the other points might have crossed, and co-operation was essential to their safety. Washington resolved to push forward, and trust to Providence.

He formed the troops into two columns. The first he led himself, accompanied by Greene, Stirling, Mercer, and Stephen; it was to make a circuit by the upper or Pennington road, to the north of Trenton. The other, led by Sullivan, and including the brigade of St. Clair, was to take the lower or river road, leading to the west end of the town. Sullivan's column was to halt a few moments at a cross-road leading to Howland's Ferry, to give Washington's column time to effect its circuit, so that the attack might be simultaneous. On arriving at Trenton, they were to force the outer guards, and push directly into the town before the enemy had time to form.

The Hessian journals before us enable us to give the reader a glance into the opposite camp on this eventful night. The situation of Washington was more critical than he was aware. Notwithstanding the secrecy with which his plans had been conducted, Colonel Rahl had received a warning from General Grant, at Princeton, of the intended attack, and of the very time it was to be made, but stating that it was to be by a detachment under Lord Stirling. Rahl was accordingly on the alert.

It so happened that about dusk of this very evening, when Washington must have been preparing to cross the Delaware, there were alarm guns and firing at the Trenton outpost. The whole garrison was instantly drawn out under arms, and Colonel Rahl hastened to the outpost. It was found in confusion, and six men wounded. A body of men had emerged from the woods, fired upon the picket,

and immediately retired.[1] Colonel Rahl, with two companies and a field-piece marched through the woods, and made the rounds of the outposts, but seeing and hearing nothing, and hearing all quiet, returned. Supposing this to be the attack against which he had been warned, and that it was "a mere flash in the pan," he relapsed into his feeling of security; and, as the night was cold and stormy, permitted the troops to return to their quarters and lay aside their arms. Thus the garrison and its unwary commander slept in fancied security, at the very time that Washington and his troops were making their toilsome way across the Delaware. How perilous would have been their situation had their enemy been more vigilant!

It began to hail and snow as the troops commenced their march, and increased in violence as they advanced, the storm driving the sleet in their faces. So bitter was the cold that two of the men were frozen to death that night. The day dawned by the time Sullivan halted at the cross-road. It was discovered that the storm had rendered many of the muskets wet and useless. "What is to be done?" inquired Sullivan of St. Clair. "You have nothing for it but to push on, and use the bayonet," was the reply. While some of the soldiers were endeavouring to clear their muskets, and squibbing off priming, Sullivan despatched an officer to apprise the commander-in-chief of the condition of their arms. He came back half-dismayed by an indignant burst of Washington, who ordered him to return instantly, and tell General Sullivan to "advance and charge."

It was about eight o'clock when Washington's column arrived in the vicinity of the village. The storm, which had rendered the march intolerable, had kept every one within doors, and the snow had deadened the tread of the troops and the rumbling of the artillery. As they approached the village, Washington, who was in front, came

[1] Who it was that made this attack upon the outpost is not clearly ascertained. The Hessian lieutenant, who commanded at the picket, says it was a patrol sent out by Washington, under command of a captain, to reconnoitre, with strict orders not to engage, but if discovered, to retire instantly as silently as possible. Colonel Reed, in a memorandum, says, "It was an advance party returning from the Jerseys to Pennsylvania."—*See Life and Corresp.* vol. i. p. 277.

to a man who was chopping wood by the roadside, and inquired, "Which way is the Hessian picket?" "I don't know," was the surly reply. "You may tell," said Captain Forest of the artillery, "for that is General Washington." The aspect of the man changed in an instant. Raising his hands to heaven, "God bless and prosper you!" cried he. "The picket is in that house, and the sentry stands near that tree."[1]

The advance guard was led by a brave young officer, Captain William A. Washington, seconded by Lieutenant James Monroe (in after years President of the United States). They received orders to dislodge the picket. Here happened to be stationed the very lieutenant whose censures of the negligence of Colonel Rahl we have just quoted. By his own account, he was very near being entrapped in the guard-house. His sentries, he says, were not alert enough; and had he not stepped out of the picket-house himself and discovered the enemy, they would have been upon him before his men could scramble to their arms. "Der feind! der feind! heraus! heraus!" (the enemy! the enemy! turn out! turn out!) was now the cry. He, at first, he says, made a stand, thinking he had a mere marauding party to deal with; but seeing heavy battalions at hand, gave way, and fell back upon a company stationed to support the picket, but which appears to have been no better prepared against surprise.

By this time the American artillery was unlimbered; Washington kept beside it, and the column proceeded. The report of fire-arms told that Sullivan was at the lower end of the town. Colonel Stark led his advance guard, and did it in gallant style. The attacks, as concerted, were simultaneous. The outposts were driven in; they retreated, firing from behind houses. The Hessian drums beat to arms; the trumpets of the light-horse sounded the alarm; the whole place was in an uproar. Some of the enemy made a wild and undirected fire from the windows of their quarters; others rushed forth in disorder, and attempted to form in the main street, while dragoons hastily mounted, and galloping about, added to the confusion. Washington ad-

[1] Wilkinson's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 129.

vanced with his column to the head of King Street, riding beside Captain Forest of the artillery. When Forest's battery of six guns was opened the general kept on the left and advanced with it, giving directions to the fire. His position was an exposed one, and he was repeatedly entreated to fall back; but all such entreaties were useless, when once he became heated in action.

The enemy were training a couple of cannon in the main street to form a battery, which might have given the Americans a serious check; but Captain Washington and Lieutenant Monroe, with a part of the advance guard, rushed forward, drove the artillerists from their guns, and took the two pieces when on the point of being fired. Both of these officers were wounded; the captain in the wrist, the lieutenant in the shoulder.

While Washington advanced on the north of the town, Sullivan approached on the west, and detached Stark to press on the lower or south end of the town. The British light horse, and about five hundred Hessians and chasseurs, had been quartered in the lower part of the town. Seeing Washington's column pressing in front, and hearing Stark thundering in their rear, they took headlong flight by the bridge across the Assunpink, and so along the banks of the Delaware toward Count Donop's encampment at Bordentown. Had Washington's plan been carried into full effect, their retreat would have been cut off by General Ewing; but that officer had been prevented from crossing the river by the ice.

Colonel Rahl, according to the account of the lieutenant who had commanded the picket, completely lost his head in the confusion of the surprise. The former, when driven in by the American advance, found the colonel on horseback, endeavouring to rally his panic-stricken and disordered men, but himself sorely bewildered. He asked the lieutenant what was the force of the assailants. The latter answered that he had seen four or five battalions in the woods; three of them had fired upon him before he had retreated —"but," added he, "there are other troops to the right and left, and the town will soon be surrounded." The colonel rode in front of his troops:—"Forward! march! advance! advance!" cried he. With some diffi-

culty he succeeded in extricating his troops from the town, and leading them into an adjacent orchard. Now was the time, writes the lieutenant, for him to have pushed for another place, there to make a stand. At this critical moment he might have done so with credit, and without loss. The colonel seems to have had such an intention. A rapid retreat by the Princeton road was apparently in his thoughts; but he lacked decision. The idea of flying before the rebels was intolerable. Some one, too, exclaimed at the ruinous loss of leaving all their baggage to be plundered by the enemy. Changing his mind he made a rash resolve. "All who are my grenadiers, forward!" cried he, and went back, writes his corporal, like a storm upon the town. "What madness was this!" writes the critical lieutenant, "A town that was of no use to us; that but ten or fifteen minutes before he had gladly left; that was now filled with three or four thousand enemies, stationed in houses, or behind walls and hedges, and a battery of six cannon planted on the main street. And he to think of retaking it with his six or seven hundred men and their bayonets!"

Still he led his grenadiers bravely but rashly on, when, in the midst of his career, he received a fatal wound from a musket-ball, and fell from his horse. His men, left without their chief, were struck with dismay; heedless of the orders of the second in command, they retreated by the right up the banks of the Assunpink, intending to escape to Princeton. Washington saw their design, and threw Colonel Hand's corps of Pennsylvania riflemen in their way; while a body of Virginia troops gained their left. Brought to a stand, and perfectly bewildered, Washington thought they were forming in order of battle, and ordered a discharge of canister-shot. "Sir, they have struck," exclaimed Forest. "Struck!" echoed the general. "Yes, sir, their colours are down." "So they are!" replied Washington, and spurred in that direction, followed by Forest and his whole command. The men grounded their arms, and surrendered at discretion; "but had not Colonel Rahl been severely wounded," remarks his loyal corporal, "we would never have been taken alive!"

The skirmishing had now ceased in every direction.

Major Wilkinson, who was with the lower column, was sent to the commander-in-chief for orders. He rode up, he says, at the moment that Colonel Rahl, supported by a file of sergeants, was presenting his sword. "On my approach," continues he, "the commander-in-chief took me by the hand, and observed, 'Major Wilkinson, this is a glorious day for our country! his countenance beaming with complacency; whilst the unfortunate Rahl, who the day before would not have changed fortunes with him, now pale, bleeding, and covered with blood, in broken accents seemed to implore those attentions which the victor was well disposed to bestow on him."

He was, in fact, conveyed with great care to his quarters, which were in the house of a kind and respectable Quaker family.

The number of prisoners taken in this affair was nearly one thousand, of which thirty-two were officers. The veteran Major Von Dechow, who had urged in vain the throwing up of breastworks, received a mortal wound, of which he died in Trenton. Washington's triumph, however, was impaired by the failure of the two simultaneous attacks. General Ewing, who was to have crossed before day at Trenton Ferry, and taken possession of the bridge leading out of the town, over which the light horse and Hessians retreated, was prevented by the quantity of ice in the river. Cadwalader was hindered by the same obstacle. He got part of his troops over, but found it impossible to embark his cannon, and was obliged, therefore, to return to the Pennsylvania side of the river. Had he and Ewing crossed, Donop's quarters would have been beaten up, and the fugitives from Trenton intercepted.

By the failure of this part of his plan, Washington had been exposed to the most imminent hazard. The force with which he had crossed, twenty-four hundred men, raw troops, was not enough to cope with the veteran garrison, had it been properly on its guard; and then there were the troops under Donop at hand to co-operate with it. Nothing saved him but the utter panic of the enemy; their want of proper alarm-places, and their exaggerated idea of his forces: for one of the journals before us (the corporal's)

states that he had with him 15,000 men, and another 6,000.[1] Even now that the place was in his possession he dared not linger in it. There was a superior force under Donop below him, and a strong battalion of infantry at Princeton. His own troops were exhausted by the operations of the night and morning in cold, rain, snow, and storm. They had to guard about a thousand prisoners, taken in action or found concealed in houses; there was little prospect of succour, owing to the season and the state of the river. Washington gave up, therefore, all idea of immediately pursuing the enemy or keeping possession of Trenton, and determined to recross the Delaware with his prisoners and captured artillery. Understanding that the brave but unfortunate Rahl was in a dying state, he paid him a visit before leaving Trenton, accompanied by General Greene. They found him at his quarters in the house of the Quaker family. Their visit, and the respectful consideration and unaffected sympathy manifested by them, evidently soothed the feelings of the unfortunate soldier, now stripped of his late-won laurels, and resigned to die rather than outlive his honour.[2]

We have given a somewhat sarcastic portrait of the colonel drawn by one of his lieutenants; another, Lieutenant Piel, paints with a soberer and more reliable pencil.

"For our whole ill luck," writes he, "we have to thank Colonel Rahl. It never occurred to him that the rebels might attack us; and, therefore, he had taken scarce any precautions against such an event. In truth, I must confess we have universally thought too little of the rebels, who, until now, have never on any occasion been able to withstand us. Our brigadier (Rahl) was too proud to retire a step before such an enemy, although nothing remained for us but to retreat.

"General Howe had judged this man from a wrong point of view, or he would hardly have intrusted such an important post as Trenton to him. He was formed for a

[1] The lieutenant gives the latter number on the authority of Lord Stirling; but his lordship meant the whole number of men intended for the three several attacks. The force that actually crossed with Washington was what we have stated.

[2] Journal of Lieut. Piel.

soldier, but not for a general. At the capture of Fort Washington he had gained much honour while under the command of a great general, but he lost all his renown at Trenton where he himself was general. He had courage to dare the hardiest enterprise; but he alone wanted the cool presence of mind necessary in a surprise like that at Trenton. His vivacity was too great; one thought crowded on another so that he could come to no decision. Considered as a private man, he was deserving of high regard. He was generous, openhanded, hospitable; never cringing to his superiors, nor arrogant to his inferiors; but courteous to all. Even his domestics were treated more like friends than servants."

The loyal corporal, too, contributes his mite of praise to his dying commander. "In his last agony," writes the grateful soldier, "he yet thought of his grenadiers, and entreated General Washington that nothing might be taken from them but their arms. A promise was given," adds the corporal, "and was kept."

Even the satirical lieutenant half mourns over his memory. "He died," says he, "on the following evening, and lies buried in this place which he has rendered so famous, in the graveyard of the Presbyterian church. Sleep well! dear Commander! (theurer Feldherr). The Americans will hereafter set up a stone above thy grave with this inscription:—

"Hier liegt der Oberst Rahl,
Mit ihm ist alles all!

(Here lies the Colonel Rahl,
With him all is over)."

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

Treatment of the Hessian Prisoners—Their interviews with Washington—Their reception by the people.

The Hessian prisoners were conveyed across the Delaware by Johnson's Ferry, into Pennsylvania; the private soldiers were marched off immediately to Newtown; the officers, twenty-three in number, remained in a small chamber in the Ferry House, where, according to their own account,

they passed a dismal night; sore at heart that their recent triumphs at White Plains and Fort Washington should be so suddenly eclipsed.

On the following morning they were conducted to Newtown under the escort of Colonel Weedon. His exterior, writes Lieutenant Piel, spoke but little in his favour, yet he won all our hearts by his kind and friendly conduct.

At Newtown the officers were quartered in inns and private houses, the soldiers in the church and jail. The officers paid a visit to Lord Stirling, whom some of them had known from his being captured at Long Island. He received them with great kindness. "Your general, Van Heister," said he, "treated me like a brother when I was a prisoner, and so, gentlemen, will you be treated by me."

"We had scarce seated ourselves," continues Lieutenant Piel, "when a long, meagre, dark-looking man, whom we took for the parson of the place, stepped forth and held a discourse in German, in which he endeavoured to set forth the justice of the American side in this war. He told us he was a Hanoverian born; called the king of England nothing but the Elector of Hanover, and spoke of him so contemptuously that his garrulity became intolerable. We answered that we had not come to America to inquire which party was in the right; but to fight for the king.

"Lord Stirling, seeing how little we were edified by the preacher, relieved us from him by proposing to take us with him to visit General Washington. The latter received us very courteously, though we understood very little of what he said, as he spoke nothing but English, a language in which none of us at that time were strong. In his aspect shines forth nothing of the great man that he is universally considered. His eyes have scarce any fire. There is, however, a smiling expression on his countenance when he speaks that wins affection and respect. He invited four of our officers to dine with him; the rest dined with Lord Stirling." One of those officers who dined with the commander-in-chief was the satirical lieutenant whom we have so often quoted, and who was stationed at the picket on the morning of the attack. However disparagingly he may have thought of his unfor-

tunate commander, he evidently had a very good opinion of himself.

"General Washington," writes he, in his journal, "did me the honour to converse a good deal with me concerning the unfortunate affair. I told him freely my opinion that our dispositions had been bad, otherwise we should not have fallen into his hands. He asked me if I could have made better dispositions, and in what manner? I told him yes; stated all the faults of our arrangements, and showed him how I would have done; and would have managed to come out of the affair with honour."

We have no doubt, from the specimens furnished in the lieutenant's journal, that he went largely into his own merits and achievements, and the demerits and shortcomings of his luckless commander. Washington, he added, not only applauded his exposition of what he would have done, but made him an eulogy thereupon, and upon his watchfulness and the defence he had made with his handful of men when his picket was attacked. Yet, according to his own account in his journal, with all his watchfulness, he came near being caught napping.

"General Washington," continues he, "is a courteous and polite man, but very cautious and reserved: talks little, and has a crafty (listige) physiognomy." We surmise the lieutenant had the most of the talk on that occasion, and that the crafty or sly expression in Washington's physiognomy may have been a lurking but suppressed smile, provoked by the lieutenant's self-laudation and wordiness.

The Hessian prisoners were subsequently transferred from place to place, until they reached Winchester, in the interior of Virginia. Wherever they arrived, people thronged from far and near to see these terrible beings of whom they had received such formidable accounts, and were surprised and disappointed to find them looking like other men. At first they had to endure the hootings and revilings of the multitude for having hired themselves out to the trade of blood; and they especially speak of the scoldings they received from old women in the villages, who upbraided them for coming to rob them of their liberty. "At length," writes the corporal in his journal,

"General Washington had written notices put up in town and country that we were innocent of this war, and had joined in it not of our free will, but through compulsion. We should, therefore, be treated not as enemies, but friends. From this time," adds he, "things went better with us. Every day came many out of the towns, old and young, rich and poor, and brought us provisions, and treated us with kindness and humanity."[1]

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

Episode—Colonel Griffin in the Jerseys—Donop decoyed—Inroad of Cadwalader and Reed—Retreat and Confusion of the Enemy's Outposts—Washington recrosses the Delaware with his Troops—The Game reversed—The Hessians hunted back through the Country—Washington made Military Dictator.

THERE was a kind of episode in the affair at Trenton. Colonel Griffin, who had thrown himself previously into the Jerseys with his detachment of Pennsylvania militia, found himself, through indisposition and the scanty number of his troops, unable to render efficient service in the proposed attack. He sent word to Cadwalader, therefore, that he should probably render him more real aid by making a demonstration in front of Donop, and drawing him off so far into the interior as to be out of the way of rendering support to Colonel Rahl.

He accordingly presented himself in sight of Donop's cantonment on the 25th of December, and succeeded in drawing him out with nearly his whole force of two thousand men. He then retired slowly before him, skirmishing, but avoiding anything like an action, until he had lured him as far as Mount Holly; when he left him to find his way back to his post at his leisure.

The cannonade of Washington's attack in Trenton on the morning of the 26th, was distinctly heard at Cadwalader's camp at Bristol. Imperfect tidings of the result reached there about eleven o'clock, and produced the highest exultation and excitement. Cadwalader made another attempt

[1] Tagabuch des corporals Johannes Reuber. MS.

to cross the river and join Washington, whom he supposed to be still in the Jerseys, following up the blow he had struck. He could not effect the passage of the river with the most of the troops, until mid-day of the 27th, when he received from Washington a detailed account of his success, and of his having recrossed into Pennsylvania.

Cadwalader was now in a dilemma. Donop, he presumed, was still at Mount Holly, whither Griffin had decoyed him; but he might soon march back. His forces were equal, if not superior in number to his own, and veterans instead of raw militia. But then there was the glory of rivalling the exploit at Trenton, and the importance of following out the effort for the relief of the Jerseys, and the salvation of Philadelphia. Beside, Washington, in all probability, after disposing of his prisoners, had again crossed into the Jerseys and might be acting offensively.

Reed relieved Cadwalader from his dilemma, by proposing that they should push on to Burlington, and there determine, according to intelligence, whether to proceed to Bordentown or Mount Holly. The plan was adopted. There was an alarm that Hessian yagers lurked in a neighbouring wood. Reed, accompanied by two officers, rode in advance to reconnoitre. He sent word to Cadwalader that it was a false alarm, and the latter took up his line of march.

Reed and his companions spurred on to reconnoitre the enemy's outposts, about four miles from Burlington, but pulled up at the place where the picket was usually stationed. There was no smoke, nor any sign of a human being. They rode up, and found the place deserted. From the country people in the neighbourhood they received an explanation. Count Donop had returned to his post from the pursuit of Griffin, only in time to hear of the disaster at Trenton. He immediately began a retreat in the utmost panic and confusion, calling in his guards and parties as he hurried forward. The troops in the neighbourhood of Burlington had decamped precipitately the preceding evening.

Colonel Reed sent back intelligence of this to Cadwalader, and still pushed on with his companions. As they rode along, they observed the inhabitants pulling down rod

rags which had been nailed to their doors; Tory signs to insure good-will from the British. Arrived at Bordentown not an enemy was to be seen; the fugitives from Trenton had spread a panic on the 26th, and the Hessians and their refugee adherents had fled in confusion, leaving their sick behind them. The broken and haggard looks of the inhabitants showed what they had suffered during the Hessian occupation. One of Reed's companions returned to Cadwalader, who had halted at Burlington, and advised him to proceed.

Cadwalader wrote in the night to Washington, informing him of his whereabouts, and that he should march for Bordentown in the morning. "If you should think proper to cross over," added he, "it may easily be effected at the place where we passed; a pursuit would keep up the panic. They went off with great precipitation, and pressed all the waggons in their reach; I am told many of them are gone to South Amboy. If we can drive them from West Jersey, the success will raise an army next spring, and establish the credit of the Continental money to support it."

There was another letter from Cadwalader, dated on the following day, from Bordentown. He had eighteen hundred men with him. Five hundred more were on the way to join him. General Mifflin, too, had sent over five hundred from Philadelphia, and three hundred from Burlington, and was to follow with seven or eight hundred more.

Colonel Reed, too, wrote from Trenton on the 28th. He had found that place without a single soldier of either army, and in a still more wretched condition than Bordentown. He urged Washington to recross the river, and pursue the advantages already gained. Donop might be overtaken before he could reach Princeton or Brunswick, where the enemy were yet in force.[1]

Washington needed no prompting of the kind. Bent upon following up his blow, he had barely allowed his troops a day or two to recover from recent exposure and fatigue, that they might have strength and spirit to pursue the retreating enemy, beat up other of their quarters, and entirely reverse affairs in the Jerseys. In this spirit, he

[1] Life and Correspondence of Pres. Reed, vol. i. p. 281.

had written to Generals McDougall and Maxwell at Morristown, to collect as large a body of militia as possible, and harass the enemy in flank and rear. Heath, also, had been ordered to abandon the Highlands, which there was no need of guarding at this season of the year, and hasten down with the eastern militia, as rapidly as possible, by the way of Hackensack, continuing on until he should send him further orders. "A fair opportunity is offered," said he, "of driving the enemy entirely from the Jerseys, or at least to the extremity of the province."

Men of influence also were despatched by him into different parts of the Jerseys, to spirit up the militia to revenge the oppression, the ravage, and insults they had experienced from the enemy, especially from the Hessians. "If what they had suffered," said he, "does not rouse their resentment, they must not possess the feelings of humanity."

On the 29th, his troops began to cross the river. It would be a slow and difficult operation, owing to the ice; two parties of light troops therefore were detached in advance, whom Colonel Reed was to send in pursuit of the enemy. They marched into Trenton about two o'clock, and were immediately put on the traces of Donop, to hang on his rear and harass him until other troops should come up. Cadwalader also detached a party of riflemen from Bordentown with like orders. Donop, in retreating, had divided his force, sending one part by a cross road to Princeton, and hurrying on with the remainder to Brunswick. Notwithstanding the severity of the weather, and the wretchedness of the road, it was a service of animation and delight to the American troops to hunt back these Hessians through the country they had recently outraged, and over ground which they themselves had trodden so painfully and despondingly in their retreat. In one instance the riflemen surprised and captured a party of refugees who lingered in the rear-guard, among whom were several newly-made officers. Never was there a more sudden reversal in the game of war than this retreat of the heavy German veterans, harassed by light parties of a raw militia, which they so lately had driven like chaff before them.

While this was going on, Washington was effecting the passage of his main force to Trenton. He himself had crossed on the 29th of December, but it took two days more to get the troops and artillery over the icy river, and that with great labour and difficulty. And now came a perplexity. With the year expired the term of several regiments which had seen most service and become inured to danger, Knowing how indispensable were such troops to lead on those which were raw and undisciplined, Washington had them paraded and invited to re-enlist. It was a difficult task to persuade them. They were haggard with fatigue and hardship and privation of every kind, and their hearts yearned for home. By the persuasions of their officers, however, and a bounty of ten dollars, the greater proportion of those from the eastward were induced to remain six weeks longer.

Hard money was necessary in this emergency. How was it to be furnished? The military chest was incompetent. On the 30th, Washington wrote by express to Robert Morris, the patriot financier at Philadelphia, whom he knew to be eager that the blow should be followed up. "If you could possibly collect a sum, if it were but one hundred, or one hundred and fifty pounds, it would be of service."

Morris received the letter in the evening. He was at his wit's end to raise the sum, for hard money was scarce. Fortunately a wealthy Quaker, in this moment of exigency, supplied the "sinews of war," and early the next morning the money was forwarded by the express.

At this critical moment, too, Washington received a letter from a committee of Congress, transmitting him resolves of that body, dated the 27th of December, investing him with military powers quite dictatorial. "Happy is it for this country," write the committee, "that the general of their forces can safely be entrusted with the most unlimited power, and neither personal security, liberty, or property, be in the least degree endangered thereby."[1]

Washington's acknowledgment of this great mark of

[1] Am. Archives, 5th Series, iii. 1510.

confidence was noble and characteristic. "I find Congress have done me the honour to entrust me with powers, in my military capacity, of the highest nature and almost unlimited extent. Instead of thinking myself freed from all *civil* obligations by this mark of their confidence, I shall constantly bear in mind that, as the sword was the last resort for the preservation of our liberties, so it ought to be the first thing laid aside when those liberties are firmly established."

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

Howe hears of the affair at Trenton—Cornwallis sent back to the Jerseys—Reconnoitring Expedition of Reed—His Exploits—Washington in peril at Trenton—Reinforced by Troops under Cadwalader and Mifflin—Position of his Men—Cornwallis at Trenton—Repulsed at the Assunpink—The American Camp menaced—Night march of Washington—Affair at Princeton—Death of Mercer—Rout of British Troops—Pursued by Washington—Cornwallis at Princeton—Baffled and perplexed—Washington at Morristown—His system of annoyance—The Tables turned upon the Enemy.

General Howe was taking his ease in winter quarters at New York, waiting for the freezing of the Delaware to pursue his triumphant march to Philadelphia, when tidings were brought him of the surprise and capture of the Hessians at Trenton. "That three old established regiments of a people who made war their profession should lay down their arms to a ragged and undisciplined militia, and that with scarcely any loss on either side," was a matter of amazement. He instantly stopped Lord Cornwallis, who was on the point of embarking for England, and sent him back in all haste to resume the command in the Jerseys.

The ice in the Delaware impeded the crossing of the American troops, and gave the British time to draw in their scattered cantonments and assemble their whole force at Princeton. While his troops were yet crossing, Washington sent out Colonel Reed to reconnoitre the position and movements of the enemy and obtain information. Six of the Philadelphia light-horse, spirited young fellows, but who had never seen service, volunteered to accompany Reed. They patrolled the country to the very vicinity of

Princeton, but could collect no information from the inhabitants, who were harassed, terrified, and bewildered by the ravaging marches to and fro of friend and enemy.

Emerging from a wood almost within view of Princeton, they caught sight, from a rising ground, of two or three red coats passing from time to time from a barn to a dwelling-house. Here must be an outpost. Keeping the barn in a line with the house so as to cover their approach, they dashed up to the latter without being discovered, and surrounded it. Twelve British dragoons were within, who, though well armed, were so panic-stricken that they surrendered without making defence. A commissary, also, was taken; the sergeant of the dragoons alone escaped. Colonel Reed and his six cavaliers returned in triumph to head-quarters. Important information was obtained from their prisoners. Lord Cornwallis had joined General Grant the day before at Princeton with a reinforcement of chosen troops. They had now seven or eight thousand men, and were pressing waggons for a march upon Trenton.[1]

Cadwalader, stationed at Crosswicks, about seven miles distant, between Bordentown and Trenton, sent intelligence to the same purport, received by him from a young gentleman who had escaped from Princeton.

Word, too, was brought from other quarters that General Howe was on the march with a thousand light troops, with which he had landed at Amboy.

The situation of Washington was growing critical. The enemy were beginning to advance their large pickets towards Trenton. Everything indicated an approaching attack. The force with him was small; to retreat across the river would destroy the dawn of hope awakened in the bosoms of the Jersey militia by the late exploit; but to make a stand without reinforcements was impossible. In this emergency he called to his aid General Cadwalader from Crosswicks, and General Mifflin from Bordentown, with their collective forces, amounting to about three thousand six hundred men. He did it with reluctance, for it seemed like involving them in the common danger, but the exigency of the case admitted of no alternative. They

[1] Life of Reed, i. 282.

promptly answered to his call, and, marching in the night, joined him on the 1st of January.

Washington chose a position for his main body on the east side of the Assunpink. There was a narrow stone bridge across it, where the water was very deep; the same bridge over which part of Rahl's brigade had escaped in the recent affair. He planted his artillery so as to command the bridge and the fords. His advance guard was stationed about three miles off in a wood, having in front a stream called Shabbakong Creek.

Early on the morning of the 2nd, came certain word that Cornwallis was approaching with all his force. Strong parties were sent out under General Greene, who skirmished with the enemy, and harassed them in their advance. By twelve o'clock they reached the Shabbakong, and halted for a time on its northern bank. Then crossing it, and moving forward with rapidity, they drove the advance guard out of the woods, and pushed on until they reached a high ground near the town. Here Hand's corps of several battalions was drawn up, and held them for a time in check. All the parties in advance ultimately retreated to the main body, on the east side of the Assunpink, and found some difficulty in crowding across the narrow bridge.

From all these checks and delays, it was nearly sunset before Cornwallis with the head of his army entered Trenton. His rear-guard, under General Leslie, rested at Maiden Head, about six miles distant, and nearly half-way between Trenton and Princeton. Forming his troops into columns, he now made repeated attempts to cross the Assunpink at the bridge and the fords, but was as often repulsed by the artillery. For a part of the time, Washington, mounted on a white horse, stationed himself at the south end of the bridge, issuing his orders. Each time the enemy was repulsed there was a shout along the American lines. At length they drew off, came to a halt, and lighted their camp fires. The Americans did the same, using the neighbouring fences for the purpose. Sir William Erskine, who was with Cornwallis, urged him, it is said, to attack Washington that evening in his camp; but his lordship declined; he felt sure of the game which had

so often escaped him; he had at length, as he thought, got Washington into a situation from which he could not escape, but where he might make a desperate stand, and he was willing to give his wearied troops a night's repose, to prepare them for the closing struggle. He would be sure, he said, "to bag the fox in the morning."

A cannonade was kept up on both sides until dark; but with little damage to the Americans. When night closed in, the two camps lay in sight of each other's fires, ruminating the bloody action of the following day. It was the most gloomy and anxious night that had yet closed in on the American army, throughout its series of perils and disasters; for there was no concealing the impending danger. But what must have been the feelings of the commander-in-chief, as he anxiously patrolled his camp, and considered his desperate position? A small stream, fordable in several places, was all that separated his raw, inexperienced army from an enemy vastly superior in numbers and discipline, and stung to action by the mortification of a late defeat. A general action with them must be ruinous; but how was he to retreat? Behind him was the Delaware, impassable from floating ice. Granting even (a thing not to be hoped) that a retreat across it could be effected, the consequences would be equally fatal. The Jerseys would be left in possession of the enemy, endangering the immediate capture of Philadelphia, and sinking the public mind into despondency.

In this darkest of moments a gleam of hope flashed upon his mind; a bold expedient suggested itself. Almost the whole of the enemy's force must by this time be drawn out of Princeton, and advancing by detachments toward Trenton, while their baggage and principal stores must remain weakly guarded at Brunswick. Was it not possible, by a rapid night-march along the Quaker Road, a different road from that on which General Leslie with the rear-guard was resting, to get past that force undiscovered, come by surprise on those left at Princeton, capture or destroy what stores were left there, and then push on to Brunswick? This would save the army from being cut off; would avoid the appearance of a defeat; and might draw the enemy away from Trenton, while some fortunate stroke might give

additional reputation to the American arms. Even should the enemy march on to Philadelphia, it could not in any case be prevented; while a counter-blow in the Jerseys would be of great consolation.

Such was the plan which Washington revolved in his mind on the gloomy banks of the Assunpink, and which he laid before his officers in a council of war, held after nightfall, at the quarters of General Mercer. It met with instant concurrence, being of that hardy, adventurous kind, which seems congenial with the American character. One formidable difficulty presented itself. The weather was unusually mild: there was a thaw, by which the roads might be rendered deep and miry, and almost impassable. Fortunately, or rather providentially, as Washington was prone to consider it, the wind veered to the north in the course of the evening; the weather became intensely cold, and in two hours the roads were once more hard and frost-bound. In the mean time, the baggage of the army was silently removed to Burlington, and every other preparation was made for a rapid march. To deceive the enemy, men were employed to dig trenches near the bridge within hearing of the British sentries, with orders to continue noisily at work until daybreak; others were to go the rounds; relieve guards at the bridge and fords; keep up the camp fires, and maintain all the appearance of a regular encampment. At daybreak they were to hasten after the army.

In the dead of the night, the army drew quietly out of the encampment and began its march. General Mercer, mounted on a favourite gray horse, was in the advance with the remnant of his flying camp, now but about three hundred and fifty men, principally relics of the brave Delaware and Maryland regiments, with some of the Pennsylvania militia. Among the latter were youths belonging to the best families of Philadelphia. The main body followed, under Washington's immediate command.

The Quaker Road was a complete roundabout, joining the main road about two miles from Princeton, where Washington expected to arrive before daybreak. The road, however, was new and rugged; cut through woods, where the stumps of trees broke the wheels of some of the

baggage trains, and retarded the march of the troops; so that it was near sunrise of a bright, frosty morning, when Washington reached the bridge over Stony Brook, about three miles from Princeton. After crossing the bridge, he led his troops along the bank of the brook to the edge of a wood, where a by-road led off to the right through low grounds, and was said by the guides to be a short cut to Princeton, and less exposed to view. By this road Washington defiled with the main body, ordering Mercer to continue along the brook with his brigade, until he should arrive at the main road, where he was to secure, and, if possible, to destroy a bridge over which it passes; so as to intercept any fugitives from Princeton, and check any retrograde movements of the British troops which might have advanced towards Trenton.

Hitherto the movements of the Americans had been undiscovered by the enemy. Three regiments of the latter, the 17th, 40th, and 55th, with three troops of dragoons, had been quartered all night in Princeton, under marching orders to join Lord Cornwallis in the morning. The 17th regiment, under Colonel Mawhood, was already on the march; the 55th regiment was preparing to follow. Mawhood had crossed the bridge by which the old or main road to Trenton passes over Stony Brook, and was proceeding through a wood beyond, when, as he attained the summit of a hill about sunrise, the glittering of arms betrayed to him the movement of Mercer's troops to the left, who were filing along the Quaker Road to secure the bridge, as they had been ordered.

The woods prevented him from seeing their number. He supposed them to be some broken portion of the American army flying before Lord Cornwallis. With this idea, he faced about and made a retrograde movement, to intercept them or hold them in check; while messengers spurred off at all speed, to hasten forward the regiments still lingering at Princeton, so as completely to surround them.

The woods concealed him until he had recrossed the bridge of Stony Brook, when he came in full sight of the van of Mercer's brigade. Both parties pushed to get possession of a rising ground on the right near the house of a Mr. Clark, of the peaceful Society of Friends. The

Americans being nearest, reached it first, and formed behind a hedge fence which extended along a slope in front of the house; whence, being chiefly armed with rifles, they opened a destructive fire. It was returned with great spirit by the enemy. At the first discharge Mercer was dismounted, "his gallant gray" being crippled by a musket-ball in the leg. One of his colonels, also, was mortally wounded and carried to the rear. Availing themselves of the confusion thus occasioned, the British charged with the bayonet; the American riflemen having no weapon of the kind, were thrown into disorder and retreated. Mercer, who was on foot, endeavoured to rally them, when a blow from the butt-end of a musket felled him to the ground. He rose and defended himself with his sword, but was surrounded, bayoneted repeatedly, and left for dead.

Mawhood pursued the broken and retreating troops to the brow of the rising ground, on which Clark's house was situated, when he beheld a large force emerging from a wood and advancing to the rescue. It was a body of Pennsylvania militia, which Washington, on hearing the firing, had detached to the support of Mercer. Mawhood instantly ceased pursuit, drew up his artillery, and by a heavy discharge brought the militia to a stand.

At this moment Washington himself arrived at the scene of action, having galloped from the by-road in advance of his troops. From a rising ground he beheld Mercer's troops retreating in confusion, and the detachment of militia checked by Mawhood's artillery, Everything was at peril. Putting spurs to his horse he dashed past the hesitating militia, waving his hat and cheering them on. His commanding figure and white horse made him a conspicuous object for the enemy's marksmen, but he heeded it not. Galloping forward under the fire of Mawhood's battery, he called upon Mercer's broken brigade. The Pennsylvanians rallied at the sound of his voice, and caught fire from his example. At the same time the 7th Virginia regiment emerged from the wood, and moved forward with loud cheers, while a fire of grapeshot was opened by Captain Moulder of the American artillery, from the brow of a ridge to the south.

Colonel Mawhood, who a moment before had thought his triumph secure, found himself assailed on every side, and separated from the other British regiments. He fought, however, with great bravery, and for a short time the action was desperate. Washington was in the midst of it; equally endangered by the random fire of his own men, and the artillery and musketry of the enemy. His aide-de-camp, Colonel Fitzgerald, a young and ardent Irishman, losing sight of him in the heat of the fight when enveloped in dust and smoke, dropped the bridle on the neck of his horse and drew his hat over his eyes, giving him up for lost. When he saw him, however, emerge from the cloud, waving his hat, and beheld the enemy giving way, he spurred up to his side. "Thank God," cried he, "your excellency is safe!" "Away, my dear colonel, and bring up the troops," was the reply; "the day is our own!" It was one of those occasions in which the latent fire of Washington's character blazed forth.

Mawhood, by this time, had forced his way, at the point of the bayonet, through gathering foes, though with heavy loss, back to the main road, and was in full retreat towards Trenton to join Cornwallis. Washington detached Major Kelly with a party of Pennsylvania troops, to destroy the bridge at Stony Brook, over which Mawhood had retreated, so as to impede the advance of General Leslie from Maiden Head.

In the mean time the 55th regiment, which had been on the left and nearer Princeton, had been encountered by the American advance-guard under General St. Clair, and after some sharp fighting in a ravine had given way, and was retreating across fields and along a by-road to Brunswick. The remaining regiment, the 40th, had not been able to come up in time for the action; a part of it fled toward Brunswick; the residue took refuge in the college at Princeton, recently occupied by them as barracks. Artillery was now brought to bear on the college, and a few shot compelled those within to surrender.

In this brief but brilliant action, about one hundred of the British were left dead on the field, and nearly three hundred taken prisoners, fourteen of whom were officers. Among the slain was Captain Leslie, son of the Earl of

Devon. His death was greatly lamented by his captured companions.

The loss of the Americans was about twenty-five or thirty men and several officers. Among the latter was Colonel Haslet, who had distinguished himself throughout the campaign, by being among the foremost in services of danger. He was indeed a gallant officer, and gallantly seconded by his Delaware troops.

A greater loss was that of General Mercer. He was said to be either dead or dying, in the house of Mr. Clark, whither he had been conveyed by his aide-de-camp, Major Armstrong, who found him, after the retreat of Mawhood's troops, lying on the field, gashed with several wounds, and insensible from cold and loss of blood. Washington would have ridden back from Princeton to visit him, and have him conveyed to a place of greater security, but was assured that, if alive, he was too desperately wounded to bear removal; in the mean time he was in good hands, being faithfully attended by his aide-de-camp, Major Armstrong, and treated with the utmost care and kindness by Mrs. Clark's family.[1]

Under these circumstances, Washington felt compelled to leave his old companion in arms to his fate. Indeed, he was called away by the exigencies of his command, having to pursue the routed regiments which were making a headlong retreat to Brunswick. In this pursuit he took the lead at the head of a detachment of cavalry. At Kingston, however, three miles to the north-east of Princeton, he pulled up, restrained his ardour, and held a council of war on horseback. Should he keep on to Brunswick or not? The capture of the British stores and baggage would make his triumph complete; but, on the other hand, his troops were excessively fatigued by their rapid march all night and hard fight in the morning. All of them had been one night without sleep, and some of them two, and many were half-starved. They were without blankets, thinly clad, some of them barefooted, and this in freezing weather. Cornwallis would be upon them before they could reach Brunswick. His rear-guard, under General Leslie, had

[1] See Washington to Col. Reed, Jan. 15.

been quartered but six miles from Princeton, and the retreating troops must have roused them. Under these considerations, it was determined to discontinue the pursuit and push for Morristown. There they would be in a mountainous country, heavily wooded, in an abundant neighbourhood, and on the flank of the enemy, with various defiles by which they might change their position according to his movements.

Filing off to the left, therefore, from Kingston, and breaking down the bridges behind him, Washington took the narrow road by Rocky Hill to Pluckamin. His troops were so exhausted, that many in the course of the march would lie down in the woods on the frozen ground and fall asleep, and were with difficulty roused and cheered forward. At Pluckamin he halted for a time, to allow them a little repose and refreshment. While they are taking breath, we will cast our eyes back to the camp of Cornwallis, to see what was the effect upon him of this masterly movement of Washington.

His lordship had retired to rest at Trenton with the sportsman's vaunt that he would "bag the fox in the morning." Nothing could surpass his surprise and chagrin when, at daybreak, the expiring watchfires, and deserted camp of the Americans, told him that the prize had once more evaded his grasp; that the general whose military skill he had decried had outgeneraled him.

For a time he could not learn whither the army, which had stolen away so silently, had directed its stealthy march. By sunrise, however, there was the booming of cannon, like the rumbling of distant thunder, in the direction of Princeton. The idea flashed upon him that Washington had not merely escaped, but was about to make a dash at the British magazines at Brunswick. Alarmed for the safety of his military stores, his lordship forthwith broke up his camp, and made a rapid march towards Princeton. As he arrived in sight of the bridge over Stony Brook, he beheld Major Kelly and his party busy in its destruction. A distant discharge of round shot from his field-pieces drove them away, but the bridge was already broken. It would take time to repair it for the passage of the artillery; so Cornwallis, in his impatience,

urged his troops breast-high through the turbulent and icy stream, and again pushed forward. He was brought to a stand by the discharge of a thirty-two pounder from a distant breastwork. Supposing the Americans to be there in force, and prepared to make resistance, he sent out some horsemen to reconnoitre, and advanced to storm the battery. There was no one there. The thirty-two pounder had been left behind by the Americans as too unwieldy, and a match had been applied to it by some lingerer of Washington's rear-guard.

Without further delay, Cornwallis hurried forward, eager to save his magazines. Crossing the bridge at Kingston, he kept on along the Brunswick road, supposing Washington still before him. The latter had got far in the advance during the delays caused by the broken bridge at Stony Brook, and the discharge of the thirty-two pounder; and the alteration of his course at Kingston had carried him completely out of the way of Cornwallis. His lordship reached Brunswick towards evening, and endeavoured to console himself, by the safety of the military stores, for being so completely foiled and out-manœuvred.

Washington, in the mean time, was all on the alert; the lion part of his nature was aroused, and while his weary troops were in a manner panting upon the ground around him, he was despatching missives and calling out aid to enable him to follow up his successes. In a letter to Putnam, written from Pluckamin during the halt, he says: "The enemy appear to be panic-struck. I am in hopes of driving them out of the Jerseys. March the troops under your command to Crosswicks, and keep a strict watch upon the enemy in this quarter. Keep as many spies out as you think proper. A number of horsemen in the dress of the country must be kept constantly going backwards and forwards for this purpose. If you discover any motion of the enemy of consequence, let me be informed thereof as soon as possible by express."

To General Heath, also, who was stationed in the Highlands of the Hudson, he wrote at the same hurried moment. "The enemy are in great consternation; and as the panic affords us a favourable opportunity to drive them out of the Jerseys, it has been determined in council that you

should move down towards New York with a considerable force, as if you had a design upon the city. That being an object of great importance, the enemy will be reduced to the necessity of withdrawing a considerable part of their force from the Jerseys, if not the whole, to secure the city."

These letters despatched, he continued forward to Morristown, where at length he came to a halt from his incessant and harassing marchings. There he learnt that General Mercer was still alive. He immediately sent his own nephew, Major George Lewis, under the protection of a flag, to attend upon him. Mercer had indeed been kindly nursed by a daughter of Mr. Clark and a negro woman, who had not been frightened from their home by the storm of battle which raged around it. At the time that the troops of Cornwallis approached, Major Armstrong was binding up Mercer's wounds. The latter insisted on his leaving him in the kind hands of Mr. Clark's household, and rejoining the army. Lewis found him languishing in great pain; he had been treated with respect by the enemy, and great tenderness by the benevolent family who had sheltered him. He expired in the arms of Major Lewis on the 12th of January, in the fifty-sixth year of his age. Dr. Benjamin Rush, afterwards celebrated as a physician, was with him when he died.

He was upright, intelligent, and brave; esteemed as a soldier and beloved as a man, and by none more so than by Washington. His career as a general had been brief, but long enough to secure him a lasting renown. His name remains one of the consecrated names of the Revolution.

From Morristown, Washington again wrote to General Heath, repeating his former orders. To Major-general Lincoln, also, who was just arrived at Peekskill, and had command of the Massachusetts militia, he writes on the 7th, "General Heath will communicate mine of this date to you, by which you will find that the greater part of your troops are to move down towards New York, to draw the attention of the enemy to that quarter; and if they do not throw a considerable body back again, you may, in all probability, carry the city, or at least blockade them in it. * * * * Be as expeditious as possible in moving

forward, for the sooner a panic-struck enemy is followed the better. If we can oblige them to evacuate the Jerseys, we must drive them to the utmost distress; for they have depended upon the supplies from that State for their winter's support."

Colonel Reed was ordered to send out rangers and bodies of militia to scour the country, waylay foraging parties, cut off supplies, and keep the cantonments of the enemy in a state of siege. "I would not suffer a man to stir beyond their lines," writes Washington, "nor suffer them to have the least communication with the country."

The expedition under General Heath toward New York, from which much had been anticipated by Washington, proved a failure. It moved in three divisions, by different routes, but all arriving nearly at the same time at the enemy's outposts at King's Bridge. There was some skirmishing, but the great feature of the expedition was a pompous and peremptory summons of Fort Independence to surrender. "Twenty minutes only can be allowed," said Heath, "for the garrison to give their answer, and, should it be in the negative, they must abide the consequences." The garrison made no answer but an occasional cannonade. Heath failed to follow up his summons by corresponding deeds. He hovered and skirmished for some days about the outposts and Spyt den Duivel Creek, and then retired before a threatened snow-storm, and the report of an enemy's fleet from Rhode Island, with troops under Lord Percy, who might land in Westchester, and take the besieging force in rear.

Washington, while he spoke of Heath's failure with indulgence in his despatches to government, could not but give him a rebuke in a private letter. "Your summons," writes he, "as you did not attempt to fulfil your threats, was not only idle, but farcical, and will not fail of turning the laugh exceedingly upon us. These things I mention to you as a friend, for you will perceive they have composed no part of my public letter."

But though disappointed in this part of his plan, Washington, having received reinforcements of militia, continued, with his scanty army, to carry on his system of annoyance. The situation of Cornwallis, who, but a short time before,

traversed the Jerseys so triumphantly, became daily more and more irksome. Spies were in his camp to give notice of every movement, and foes without to take advantage of it, so that not a foraging party could sally forth without being waylaid. By degrees he drew in his troops which were posted about the country, and collected them at New Brunswick and Amboy, so as to have a communication by water with New York, whence he was now compelled to draw nearly all his supplies; "presenting," to use the words of Hamilton, "the extraordinary spectacle of a powerful army, straitened within narrow limits by the phantom of a military force, and never permitted to transgress those limits with impunity."

In fact, the recent operations in the Jerseys had suddenly changed the whole aspect of the war, and given a triumphant close to what had been a disastrous campaign.

The troops, which for months had been driven from post to post, apparently an undisciplined rabble, had all at once turned upon their pursuers, and astounded them by brilliant stratagems and daring exploits. The commander, whose cautious policy had been sneered at by enemies, and regarded with impatience by misjudging friends, had all at once shown that he possessed enterprise as well as circumspection, energy as well as endurance, and that beneath his wary coldness lurked a fire to break forth at the proper moment. This year's campaign, the most critical one of the war, and especially the part of it which occurred in the Jerseys, was the ordeal that made his great qualities fully appreciated by his countrymen, and gained for him from the statesmen and generals of Europe the appellation of the AMERICAN FABIUS